

# The Pump Handle



"I had an interview with the Board of Guardians of St. James's parish, on the evening of Thursday, 7th September, and represented the above circumstances to them. In consequence of what I said, the handle of the pump was removed on the following day."

John Snow, 1855

## November 2006 Topics

- National Influenza Vaccination Week
- World AIDS Day 2006
- Viral Gastroenteritis Outbreaks
- Summer of 2006 Shigellosis Outbreak in North Dakota
- Hepatitis C Training Workshop, Bismarck, N.D. 



### **National Influenza Vaccination Week: Nov. 27 through Dec. 3, 2006**

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Influenza Vaccine Summit have designated the week of Nov. 27 to Dec. 3, 2006, as National Influenza Immunization Week – designed to emphasize the value of vaccination not only during the months of October and November and that it is never too late to get the flu shot.

In North Dakota, the flu season lasts from October through May. Vaccination typically begins in October and should continue throughout the remainder of the season. During National Influenza Immunization Week, people are encouraged to get their flu shot. In addition, people also should be aware that getting vaccinated beyond October and November is beneficial and that influenza activity usually does not peak until after the New Year.

**REMEMBER: It is never too late to get the flu shot!**

For more information about National Influenza Immunization Week and influenza in North Dakota, to order educational materials or to see if there is a vaccine clinic in your area, visit the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) influenza website at [www.ndflu.com](http://www.ndflu.com).



### **World AIDS Day 2006**

December 1 is World AIDS Day. Established by the World Health Organization in 1988, World AIDS Day serves to focus global attention on the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The 2006 World AIDS Day theme promoted in the United States by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is *The Promise of Partnerships*. Observation of this day provides an opportunity for governments, national AIDS programs, churches, community organizations and individuals to demonstrate the importance of the fight against HIV/AIDS.

For more information about national strategies to fight the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, visit [www.omhrc.gov/hivaidsobservances/world/index.html](http://www.omhrc.gov/hivaidsobservances/world/index.html).



### **Viral Gastroenteritidis Outbreaks**

Since October 2006, 15 outbreaks of viral gastroenteritis have been reported to the NDDoH from eight counties, including Cass, Grand Forks, Griggs, McHenry, Nelson, Stutsman, Walsh and Ward. Nine long-term care facilities (nursing homes), two assisted-living homes, one basic-care facility and one developmental-care facility have been affected. A viral gastroenteritis outbreak is defined as two or more people associated with a common venue having vomiting and/or diarrhea lasting 24 to 48 hours. One foodborne outbreak occurred at a restaurant associated with an ill food handler who also worked at the local nursing home where residents and staff had previously been reported ill.

More than 240 residents and 140 staff were ill at the time the outbreaks were reported. Twelve out of 15 total stool specimens collected from eight facilities reporting outbreaks tested positive for norovirus.

Outbreaks of gastroenteritis in long-term care facilities are not uncommon, occurring most often during the winter and early spring. Norovirus is the most common cause of viral gastroenteritis outbreaks and is often called the “winter vomiting disease” or “stomach flu.” Although it is commonly referred to as the stomach flu, it has no relationship to the influenza virus that causes respiratory infections. Hand washing, staying home when ill and cleaning of environmental surfaces are important in preventing norovirus infections.

For more information about prevention of viral gastroenteritis or to report an outbreak, visit [www.health.state.nd.us/disease/Gastroenteritis/](http://www.health.state.nd.us/disease/Gastroenteritis/) or call Disease Control at 701.328.2378.

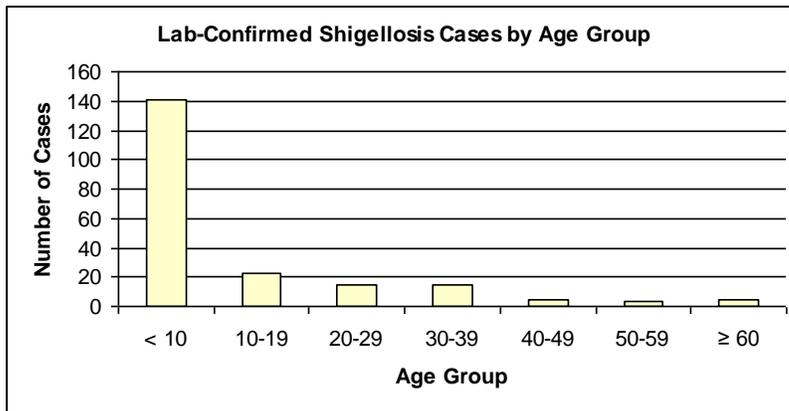


### **Summer of 2006 Shigellosis Outbreak in ND**

As of Nov. 27, 2006, 206 cases of shigellosis have been reported in North Dakota since July 1, 2006. Seventeen North Dakota counties have reported cases of *Shigella*; 86 percent of cases were reported from four counties, including Rolette (92; 45 percent), Ramsey (43; 21 percent), Ward (23; 11 percent) and Benson (20; 10 percent). Eighty-eight of the cases were American Indian, 37 white, 1 black, 9 other and 71 unknown. Information gathered during patient interviews indicates primarily person-to-person transmission.

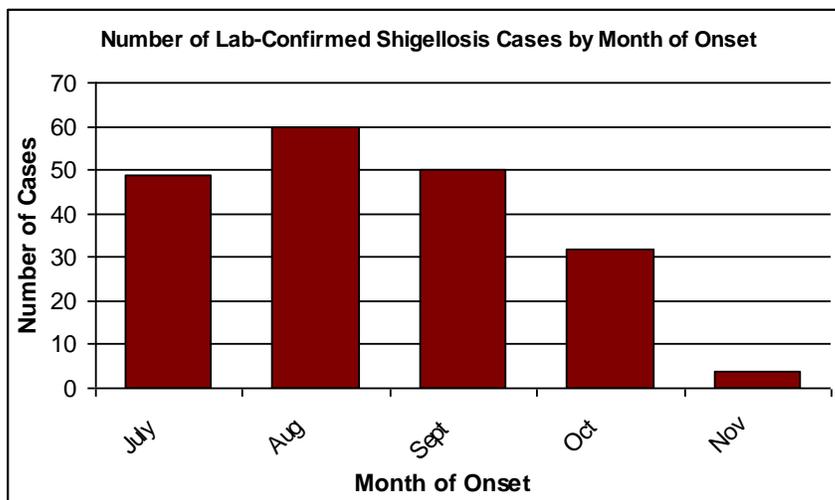
One hundred and forty-one cases (almost 70 percent) are children younger than 10 (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Lab-Confirmed Shigellosis Cases by Age Group -- July 1 to Nov. 27, 2006, North Dakota.**



Cases of *Shigella* are still being reported to the NDDoH; however, the frequency of reports has decrease significantly since the end of October (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Number of Lab-Confirmed Shigellosis Cases by Month of Onset – July 1 to Nov. 27, 2006, North Dakota**



If diagnosed with shigellosis, health-care workers, food handlers, and children and staff of day-care centers should stay home until diarrhea has ceased and two consecutive stool cultures (taken at least 24 hours following completion of antibiotic treatment and collected at least 24 hours apart) test negative for the bacteria.

For information about shigellosis and North Dakota statistics, visit [www.health.state.nd.us/disease/Shigella/default.htm](http://www.health.state.nd.us/disease/Shigella/default.htm) or call 701.328.2378.



**Hepatitis C Training Workshop, Bismarck, N.D.**



Save the date! On April 20, 2007, the North Dakota Department of Health, in collaboration with the Hepatitis C Support Project, is sponsoring a one-day hepatitis C training workshop in Bismarck, N.D. Topics include epidemiology, diagnostics and treatment. There is no fee to attend, and a limited number of travel scholarships are available. More information about the hepatitis C training workshop is available at

[www.health.state.nd.us/disease/Hepatitis/Documents/Hep%20C%20flyer.pdf](http://www.health.state.nd.us/disease/Hepatitis/Documents/Hep%20C%20flyer.pdf).

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*The pump handle picture in the title was obtained from the website [www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow.html](http://www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow.html).*



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