

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 2009 Topics

- Influenza H1N1 Update
- Be Food Safe During the Holiday Season
- HPV Vaccine Approved for Males
- World AIDS Day December 1, 2009
- Acute Viral Gastroenteritis Activity Update



Influenza H1N1 Update

The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) continues to monitor influenza infections in the state. As of Dec. 8, 2009, 3,203 laboratory identified influenza cases had been reported from 51 counties. Of the 3,203 cases, 507 have been confirmed as 2009 H1N1 influenza cases. Not every influenza case is subtyped. Of those cases that were subtyped, most were identified as 2009 H1N1; therefore H1N1 is the predominant influenza strain circulating in North Dakota. The median age of all reported influenza cases is 12.94 years (2009 H1N1 median age is 15.15 years), and the ages have ranged from 1 week to 87 years. Of the 3,203 influenza reports, 1,336 reports included hospitalization data, of which 94 cases required hospitalization. Three influenza-related deaths have been reported in North Dakota. One was male and two were female. All were older than 60 with underlying health conditions.

2009 Influenza H1N1 Confirmed Case Summary					
Total Cases		Age Information		Influenza Virus Strains	
		Range	Cases	Type	Cases
Gender		<10	1252	A, Novel H1N1	507
Female	1616	10-19	984	A, H1	0
Male	1587	20-29	440	A, H3	1
		30-39	179	A, Unspecified	2663
Hospitalized	94	40-49	160	B	22
		50-59	128	Unknown	10
Deaths	3	60 and over	60	Total	3,203

The NDDoH has activated a toll-free influenza hotline for people to call if they have questions about influenza. The hotline cannot provide medical advice to callers. For that information, people should call their physicians. The number to call is 1.866.207.2880. The hotline is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Standard Time. Information about influenza also is available on the Department of Health's influenza website at www.ndflu.com.

Influenza Website

The NDDoH influenza website has information regarding both seasonal and H1N1 influenza. Some topics on the website include:

- North Dakota influenza statistics.
- Fact sheets and other influenza materials.
- Educational material order forms.
- Flu shot clinic locator.
- Vaccine information.
- Testing and reporting information.

The 2009-2010 Influenza Campaign On-Line Reporting Site also is found on the NDDoH influenza website. At this site, www.ndflu.com/Reporting/OnLineReporting.aspx, reports are available for school absenteeism and outbreaks and also influenza and influenza-like-illness outbreak reports for long-term care and other types of institutions.

Check out the NDDoH website at www.ndflu.com for the latest information about influenza. If you have additional questions, please contact the NDDoH at 701.328.2378 or 800.472.2180.

H1N1 Vaccine Update

The NDDoH continues to receive weekly allocations of H1N1 vaccine. Providers and clinics throughout North Dakota will continue to receive H1N1 vaccine as it becomes available.

As of Dec. 7, 2009, local public health units and private providers who have adequate H1N1 vaccine supplies may begin vaccinating all individuals. In some areas, the health units and private providers may have to continue vaccinating only the priority groups

because of higher demand in the priority groups and a limited supply of vaccine. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) priority groups include:

- Pregnant women.
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months.
- Health-care and emergency medical services personnel.
- All people ages 6 months through 24 years.
- People ages 25 through 64 who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications.

The NDDoH has developed a frequently asked questions and answers document regarding the 2009 H1N1 vaccine available at www.ndflu.com/Vaccine/H1N1_documents.aspx. Questions and answers are available for general questions about the H1N1 vaccine, flumist vaccine, vaccine safety, vaccination storage and handling, billing, and vaccination and pregnancy.

For more information about H1N1 vaccine, please visit www.ndflu.com/Vaccine/ or call the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378. Questions regarding laboratory testing may be directed to the Division of Laboratory Services at 701.328.6272.



Be Food Safe During the Holiday Season

The holiday season is quickly approaching. You can help educate the public about food safety this upcoming holiday season with a few simple tips (source: www.ndhealth.gov/FoodLodging/):

- Store and prepare food safely.
 - Refrigerate or freeze perishable food within four hours of shopping or preparing.
 - Find separate preparation areas in the work space for raw and cooked food.
 - Wash hands, cutting boards, dishes, utensils and work surfaces frequently with hot, soapy water.
 - Avoid licking the spoon or the mixing bowl if the batter contains uncooked eggs.
- Cook food to safe internal temperatures.
 - Use a food thermometer to check internal temperatures of all food. All poultry should reach a safe minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees F.
 - Every part of the turkey should reach 165 degrees F.
 - Stuffing should reach 165 degrees F, whether cooked inside the bird or in a separate dish.
- Keep food out of the “danger zone.”
 - Keep hot food at or above 135 degrees F. Place cooked food in chafing dishes, preheated steam tables, warming trays and/or slow cookers.
 - Keep cold food such as pumpkin pie, eggnog, cheesecake, cream pies and cakes with whipped-cream or cream-cheese frostings at or below 41 degrees F.
 - Discard food left out at room temperature for more than four hours.

- Leftovers should be refrigerated in shallow containers within four hours.
 - Use leftover turkey and stuffing within three to four days; gravy within one to two days; or freeze these foods.
 - Reheat thoroughly (165 degrees F) until hot and steaming.

If a foodborne outbreak (two or more people ill with similar symptoms after consuming a common food) is suspected, it is important to notify the NDDoH or the local public health unit in your area as soon as possible so that exposed individuals, as well as the source and the cause of the illness, can be identified rapidly. Stool samples should be collected if a foodborne illness is suspected.

Call the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 to report a suspected foodborne outbreak.



HPV Vaccine Approved for Males

Gardasil®, the quadrivalent human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine manufactured by Merck, has been approved for use in males ages 9 through 26. Vaccination of males was approved to be added to the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, so state-supplied Gardasil® may be administered to males through the VFC program. Children who are 18 years and younger and American Indian or Alaska Native, Medicaid-eligible, or uninsured or underinsured (has insurance, but it does not cover a particular vaccine) are eligible for VFC vaccine. Providers may begin ordering Gardasil® to vaccinate males.

HPV types 16 and 18 cause the majority of anal, penile and oropharyngeal cancers in males. HPV types 6 and 11 cause more than 90 percent of genital warts in males. Although the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) did not make a formal recommendation to routinely vaccinate all males, the vaccine is available to be given to males with the same dosage schedule as females. The male indication will be added to the North Dakota immunization schedule and vaccine coverage table.

The ACIP recommends routine HPV vaccination with either Gardasil® or Cervarix® for all females ages 11 and 12. Vaccination is also recommended for females ages 13 through 26 who haven't been previously vaccinated or who have not completed the complete series. The vaccine series may be started as early as age 9.

The ACIP's provisional recommendations for HPV vaccination are now available and can be found at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/provisional/downloads/hpv-vac-dec2009-508.pdf.



World AIDS Day December 1, 2009

World AIDS Day serves as a day to heighten awareness and to focus on prevention efforts to decrease the devastating impact the HIV/AIDS epidemic has on the world. Observation of this day provides an opportunity for governments, national AIDS programs, churches, community organizations and individuals to come together to battle the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The theme for World AIDS Day 2009 is "human rights and access to treatment." The theme was chosen to address the significant need to protect human rights and make HIV prevention, treatment, care and support accessible to all. The theme acts as a call to countries to remove laws that discriminate against people living with HIV and AIDS.

As of Dec. 31, 2008, 441 cases of HIV/AIDS have been reported in North Dakota since HIV surveillance began in 1984. So far in 2009, a record 37 HIV/AIDS cases have been reported to the North Dakota Department of Health. The previous record set in 2008, was 28. The increase in HIV cases could be attributed to the previously diagnosed individuals moving into the state and new diagnoses due to an increase in testing. About one-fourth of the people estimated to be HIV positive are believed to be unaware of their infections, underscoring the need for HIV testing and prevention services.

For more information about HIV testing and other HIV/AIDS services, call the North Dakota Department of Health HIV/AIDS program hotline at 800.70.NDHIV or visit the program's website at www.ndhealth.gov/hiv.



Acute Viral Gastroenteritis Activity Update

As of Dec. 1, 2009, there have been no confirmed viral gastroenteritis outbreaks reported to the NDDoH. One possible viral gastroenteritis outbreak may have occurred in October 2009 at a restaurant in North Dakota as a result of ill food handlers. Only one family reported illness as a result of eating at this restaurant. Illness did not have a confirmed diagnosis but was consistent with norovirus.

Outbreaks of gastroenteritis most often occur in 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. The CDC estimates noroviruses cause 23 million cases of acute gastroenteritis each year and about 50 percent of all foodborne outbreaks.

Practice good hand hygiene, disinfect contaminated surfaces and do not return to work or school until 24 to 72 hours after symptoms resolve are recommended measures for the prevention and control of norovirus infections. Please visit www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5633a2.htm for more information about the prevention of norovirus.

To report an acute viral gastroenteritis outbreak, please contact the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378 or submit on online report form at www.ndhealth.gov/disease/GI/.

Contributing authors of The Pump Handle include Tatia Hardy, Krissie Guerard, Abbi Pierce, Michelle Feist, Julie Wagendorf, Kirby Kruger, Tracy Miller and Sarah Weninger. For questions, suggestions or inquiries, or to be removed from the mailing list, please contact Sarah Weninger of the Division of Disease Control at 701.328.2366 or by email at sweninger@nd.gov.

The pump handle picture in the title was obtained from the website www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow.html.



Terry Dwelle, MD, MPHTM, State Health Officer
Craig Lambrecht, MD, MHSA, MBA, MPH, Chief, Medical Services Section
Kirby Kruger, Director, Division of Disease Control