

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 2014 Topics

- Leptospirosis in Zoo Animal
- Rumored Measles Case
- Dos and Don'ts for Holiday Cooking
- Influenza Update/H3N2 Influenza
- NEW EMPLOYEES!



Leptospirosis in Zoo Animal

On November 21, 2014, the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) received a report from a veterinarian who assisted in an exploratory surgery and necropsy of a dik-dik, a small antelope, at a North Dakota zoo. Laboratory results indicated that the dik-dik had leptospirosis. Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease, that if untreated can cause kidney damage, meningitis, liver failure, respiratory distress and even death. The bacteria is spread through the urine of infected animals, and humans can become infected through contact with urine or other body fluids from infected animals or contact with water, soil, or food contaminated with the urine of infected animals. Three veterinarians and roughly ten keepers may have been exposed to the dik-dik. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was consulted on the exposures and provided recommendations for monitoring of symptoms. To decrease risk of disease transmission, it is recommended that veterinary staff and others who may handle infected animals or clean their cages should:

- Wear gloves to avoid direct contact with urine and other body fluids
- Wear additional personal protective equipment (PPE), including masks and protective eyewear when performing activities that may cause splashes, such as cleaning cages

- All blood, urine and tissues from infected animals should be considered biologically hazardous waste
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after working with or cleaning up after infected animals
- Clean surfaces that may be contaminated with urine or body fluids from an infected animal with an antibacterial cleaning solution (i.e., solution of one part household bleach in 10 parts water)
- Isolate animals with leptospirosis from other animals



Rumored Measles Case

On November 12, the NDDoH received several phone calls regarding a rumored case of measles in the state. Upon further investigation, the NDDoH was able to determine that the individual was not diagnosed with measles and the clinical presentation of illness was not entirely consistent with that of measles.

Measles is a virus that causes rash, cough, runny nose, eye irritation and fever. It can lead to ear infection, pneumonia, seizures, brain damage and death. All children are recommended to be vaccinated against measles at ages 12 to 15 months and 4 to 6 years. Measles is included in a combination vaccine with mumps and rubella (known as MMR vaccine). All adults born in 1957 or later should have at least one dose of MMR vaccine. All health-care workers should have two doses of MMR vaccine. Measles is a mandatory reportable condition and should be reported immediately.

The NDDoH was able to rule out the possibility of measles in the state; however, this serves as a strong reminder that measles occurs in the United States and could reemerge in North Dakota. This year the United States has experienced a record number of measles cases. To date, there have been 610 confirmed measles cases, the most cases since measles elimination was documented in 2000. The majority of cases in the United States have occurred in unvaccinated individuals.



Dos and Don'ts for Holiday Cooking

Holidays are times when family and friends get together, usually over a meal prepared in the kitchen. Make it your goal this year to keep yourself, your family and your friends healthy by practicing good food safety. Here are some dos and don'ts for planning and preparing holiday meals that are safe and healthy (source – www.cdc.gov/foodsafety):

- **DO** hand washing
- **DO** check foodsafety.gov for recalled foods before planning holiday meals
- **DO** separate raw meat and poultry from other foods in the shopping cart
- **DO** put raw meat and poultry and individual plastic bags to guard against cross-contamination
- **DO** make grocery shopping the last trip before heading home
- **DON'T** use raw eggs in unbaked holiday treats. Instead, opt for pasteurized eggs in eggnog recipes and provide eggless cookie dough for nibblers. Cook eggs thoroughly before serving

- ***DON'T*** forget rest times when cooking with microwave ovens. Instead, check the wattage before cooking and follow the recipe or package instructions exactly – including rest time (additional cooking that occurs after the microwave stops)
- ***DON'T*** let double-dippers leave germs for other guests. Instead, encourage guests to spoon dip and goodies on their plate
- ***DON'T*** scrimp on clean serving utensils and toothpicks. Instead, provide plenty of both. Put utensils in an easy-to-reach container with the handle-side up
- ***DON'T*** let germs camp out on your table, kitchen counter or in doggie bags waiting to go home with guests. Instead, refrigerate all leftovers within two hours of serving. Wipe tables, counters and other kitchen surfaces with warm, soapy water or disinfectant.
- ***DO*** discard perishable food unrefrigerated for two hours or more; one hour in air temps above 90°F.
- ***DO*** cut whole roasts, hams and turkeys in pieces before refrigerating. Keep turkey legs, wings and thighs whole.
- ***DO*** wrap or cover and refrigerate (40°F or below) or freeze leftovers in shallow dishes as soon as possible. Eat within three to four days if refrigerated.



Influenza Update/H3N2 Influenza

The NDDoH saw increased numbers of early season influenza cases this month, with a total of 68 lab-confirmed cases reported as of November 28, 2014. Both influenza A and influenza B were identified, and all typed cases of influenza A were the A H3N2 strain. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced that some of the A H3N2 samples they had received for testing so far this season had drifted. Both the 2012 H3N2 and drifted H3N2 strain are circulating. No drifted H3N2 has been identified yet in North Dakota. However, CDC testing is conducted on only a small number of North Dakota samples, and the strain has been identified in neighboring states. For this reason, it is likely the drifted strain is present in North Dakota. Although vaccine effectiveness against this strain will be reduced, the vaccine may still provide some protection or reduce illness severity in people infected with the drifted H3N2 strain. The vaccine also provides protection against other strains of influenza that are circulating this season.



NEW EMPLOYEES!

★**Name:** Sherrie Meixner

Title: VFC/AFIX Coordinator

Education Background: BS (Medical Technology) from Winona State University

Past Experience: Medical technology generalist at several hospitals, lab manager at public health unit and lab manager at a blood center

Family/Hobbies: Husband-Steve, one son-Brad. I enjoy reading, family time and outings, and game apps on my cell phone.

★**Name:** Dominick Fitzsimmons

Title: NDIIS Coordinator

Education Background: BSc. Honours, Biomedical Science, National University of Ireland, Galway and Postgraduate research studies in Molecular Biology at Umeå University, Sweden.

Past Experience: Most recently worked in vocational counselling for people with disabilities and traumatic brain injuries, and before that mouse olfactory genetic research, bioinformatics programming, animal behavioral models of Parkinson's disease, drug therapy and adult stem cell research projects.

Family/Hobbies: The last singleton on the shelf in my family, I have no pets but wouldn't mind an old, lazy dog to hang around with. Outside of work, I have a big interest in European languages and history, and love to be able to learn anything new. Feel free to share some *bon mots* with me, whatever their derivation!



Terry Dwelle, MD, MPHTM, State Health Officer

Kirby Kruger, Director, Division of Disease Control; Chief Medical Services Section

Tracy K. Miller, PhD, MPH, State Epidemiologist