



EPI WATCH

Monthly Epidemiology and Preparedness Newsletter

August 2018

Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County

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Division of Disease Control and Health Protection

Disease Reporting

To report diseases and clusters of illness:

Phone: (727) 824-6932

Fax: (727) 484-3865 (excluding HIV/AIDS)

To report HIV/AIDS by mail:

Surveillance Room 3-138
205 Dr. MLK Jr St. N
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Immunization Awareness Month

The Florida Department of Health and partners recognize National Immunization Awareness Month in August to promote the importance of vaccination for people of all ages.



Healthcare Professionals should:

- **Assess** immunization status of all patients at every clinical encounter.
- Strongly **recommend** vaccines that patients need.
- **Administer** needed vaccines or **refer** patients to a vaccine provider.
- **Document** vaccines received by patients. This can be done in Florida's centralized immunization registry, Florida SHOTS. More information on enrollment and training tools can be found here: <http://flshotsusers.com/>

Vaccine resources, including Vaccine Immunization Sheets (VIS) and immunization schedules for children and adults, can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/index.html>

Red Tide Blooms

Red Tide blooms continue to be detected along Florida's coastline. Although high concentrations are being seen in counties located south of Pinellas, forecasts by the University of South Florida and Fish and Wildlife Conservation predict that red tide blooms are expected to spread to other counties.

Red Tide is caused by increased levels of microscopic algae in the water. The most common Red Tide algae species present in Florida and the Gulf of Mexico is *Karenia brevis*. This microorganism is mostly found in salty coastal waters and is rarely found in freshwater system such as lakes and rivers. At higher concentrations, *K. brevis* can produce harmful toxins which can give water a red or brown hue when mixed with airborne sea spray. The toxins produced by the algae can have several health consequences including irritation of eyes, nose, and throat. Areas with Red Tide blooms should be avoided by individuals with chronic respiratory conditions including asthma and chronic lung disease.

Before you head to the beach, check the Red Tide status. For most up to date status on Red Tide consult the [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission advisories](#). Additional information and resources can be found [here](#).

Health Advisories and Alerts

[Multidrug-Resistant *Salmonella* Infections Linked to Raw Turkey Products](#)

[Salmonella Infections Linked to Hy-Vee Spring Pasta Salad](#)

[Multistate Outbreaks of *Salmonella* Infections Linked to Contact with Live Poultry in Backyard Flocks, 2018](#)

[Multistate Outbreak of *Salmonella* Enteritidis Infections Linked to Pet Guinea Pigs](#)

CDC Travel Health Notices

More information can be found at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

Venezuelan Breakdown of Health Infrastructure

The CDC has issued a Level 3 Travel Warning, recommending all nonessential travel to Venezuela be avoided at this time. Infectious diseases are an increasing threat in the country, including large outbreaks of measles, diphtheria, and malaria reported in the last year¹. In addition, Venezuela currently has inadequate healthcare availability, including a scarcity of medicine, medical supplies, electricity, and food and water due to a breakdown of the health infrastructure.¹

Violent crime and unrest is also of concern, with recorded events of arbitrary arrest and detention of U.S. citizens by security forces.² As a result, avoid travel to Venezuela unless necessary.

Ebola in Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Ministry of Health declared a new Ebola outbreak on August 1, 2018 in the North Kivu Province³. As of August 8, 17 cases have been confirmed and there have been 37 deaths (10 confirmed cases, 27 probable cases)³. The risk to most travelers to the DRC remains low. The CDC is recommending the practice of usual precautions when travelling to this country.³

Zika Virus in Several Countries

Many Caribbean islands, Argentina, and Singapore have reported mosquitoes carrying and spreading Zika to people.⁴ Infection with the Zika virus typically results in mild symptoms; however, infection during pregnancy can result in poor pregnancy outcomes. Because there are no vaccines or medical treatment for Zika, those who must travel should follow CDC recommendations for preventing Zika infection and spread to others.⁵

MERS: Hajj and Umrah in Saudi Arabia

August 19-24, 2018 marks the approximate time many will take an annual pilgrimage (Hajj or Umrah) to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. As a result of such a large public gathering, there is an increased threat of communicable disease transmission and unique health risks. It is important to be aware of the symptoms and spread of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS - CoV). Symptoms of MERS-CoV includes severe acute respiratory illness with fever, cough and shortness of breath. The virus likely spreads from respiratory secretions of infected persons through close contact, and all reported cases have been linked to countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula.⁶ Since the first report in 2012, only two U.S. cases have been confirmed, both in 2014, from travel to the Arabian Peninsula; however, world-wide there have been over 600 confirmed cases from 2012 to 2014.^{6,7}

Polio in Somalia

An outbreak of Polio has been identified in the Mogadishu and Hiran and Shabelle regions of Somalia. CDC recommends that all travelers receive the polio vaccine. Polio is a deadly disease of the nervous system and is spread with contact of infected feces and contaminated food and water.

Rift Valley Fever in Kenya

Since June 2018 an outbreak of Rift Valley Fever has been confirmed in Kenya in the following counties: Wajir, Marsabit, and Siaya. Symptoms include fever, weakness, back pain, dizziness, and in rare cases inflammation of the brain and hemorrhagic fever. The CDC recommends that travelers avoid handling raw meat, wear protective equipment while working with animals, and prevent mosquito bites while in Kenya.⁸

References:

1. Travelers' Health. Health infrastructure breakdown in Venezuela. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/health-infrastructure-breakdown-venezuela>. Updated May 2018. Accessed August 2018.
2. Travel Advisories. Venezuela travel advisory. U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs. <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/venezuela-travel-advisory.html>. May 29 2018. Accessed August 2018.
3. Ebola Virus Disease. Ebola situation reports: Democratic Republic of the Congo. World Health Organization. <http://www.who.int/ebola/situation-reports/drc-2018/en/>. Updated August 2018. Accessed August 2018.
4. Travelers' Health. Travel health notices. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>. Updated August 2018. Accessed August 2018.
5. Travelers' Health. Zika virus in Aruba. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/zika-virus-aruba>. Updated August 2018. Accessed August 2018.
6. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/index.html>. Updated July 2016. Accessed August 2018.
7. Florida Department of Health. (2014). *Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) Surveillance, Investigation, and Reporting Guidance for County Health Departments (CHDs)*. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) Guidance. Guidance document number 2014-1; version 1.0. http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mers/_documents/gsi-mers.pdf.
8. Travelers' Health. Rift Valley Fever in Kenya. Centers for Disease and Control Prevention. <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/rift-valley-fever-kenya>. Updated July 2018. Accessed August 2018.

Select Reportable Diseases in Pinellas County

Disease	Pinellas		YTD Total		Pinellas County Annual Totals		
	July 2018	July 2017	Pinellas 2018	Florida 2018	2017	2016	2015
A. Vaccine Preventable							
Measles	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
Mumps	0	0	2	37	2	0	0
Pertussis	0	3	9	188	35	18	17
Varicella	4	0	40	484	24	74	38
B. CNS Diseases & Bacteremias							
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)	0	0	0	10	2	2	3
Meningitis (Bacterial, Cryptococcal, Mycotic)	0	0	3	64	7	7	6
Meningococcal Disease	0	0	1	14	0	0	1
C. Enteric Infections							
Campylobacteriosis	18	18	154	2823	207	137	104
Cryptosporidiosis	5	5	19	313	40	27	49
Cyclosporiasis	4	1	4	47	6	5	3
<i>E. coli</i> Shiga Toxin (+)	1	0	9	491	9	3	2
Giardiasis	2	2	26	624	45	41	30
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
Listeriosis	0	0	1	25	0	2	2
Salmonellosis	19	27	127	3237	278	188	196
Shigellosis	6	3	33	899	26	19	174
D. Viral Hepatitis							
Hepatitis A	9	0	22	127	0	2	4
Hepatitis B: Pregnant Woman +HBsAg	2	2	11	233	25	28	37
Hepatitis B, Acute	2	5	29	475	51	68	57
Hepatitis C, Acute	6	3	30	219	30	49	32
E. VectorBorne/Zoonoses							
Animal Rabies	0	0	4	90	2	4	1
Rabies, possible exposure	16	22	82	2401	140	131	114
Chikungunya Fever	0	0	0	4	0	1	2
Dengue	0	0	0	13	0	2	3
Eastern Equine Encephalitis	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Lyme Disease	3	0	7	74	17	11	6
Malaria	0	0	0	30	0	0	2
West Nile Virus	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Zika Virus Disease	1	2	1	95	5		
F. Others							
Chlamydia	394	342	2544	n/a	4188	4133	4168
Gonorrhea	118	131	849	n/a	1574	1566	1439
Hansen's Disease	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
Legionellosis	1	1	10	209	23	19	18
Mercury Poisoning	0	0	0	26	1	0	1
Syphilis, Total	28	33	241	n/a	382	400	289
Syphilis, Infectious (Primary and Secondary)	20	14	111	n/a	160	188	151
Syphilis, Early Latent	6	11	78	n/a	128	146	83
Syphilis, Congenital	0	1	2	n/a	5	2	3
Syphilis, Late Syphilis (Late Latent; Neuro-syphilis)	2	7	50	n/a	89	64	52
Tuberculosis	2	2	17	n/a	28	31	14
<i>Vibrio</i> Infections	0	1	2	121	11	8	11

n/a = not available at this time.

Reportable diseases include confirmed and probable cases only. All case counts are provisional. Data is collected from the Merlin Reportable Disease database, surveillance systems maintained at the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County, and Florida CHARTS <http://www.floridacharts.com/charts/default.aspx>. STD data in PRISM is continually updated. Please note, data from the previous month takes up to an additional month or more to be correctly updated.