



EPI WATCH

Monthly Epidemiology Newsletter

November 2019

Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County

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Division of
Disease Control and
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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



Follow us:

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November is National Diabetes Month.

This year, the National Diabetes Education Program is partnering with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute to share the link between diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

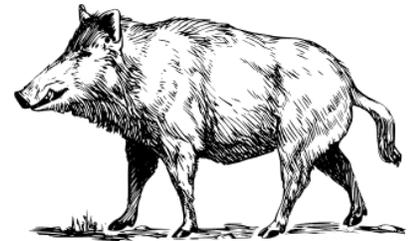


Click [here](#) for more information.

Brucellosis Among Hunters

By Maggie Quitter

As the temperature cools down, Floridians engage in more outdoor activities, including hunting wild game. Hunting certain animals, particularly feral swine, place hunters at an increased risk of contracting infectious diseases such as brucellosis. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates the state-wide prevalence of brucellosis among feral swine herds to be 10-20% with prevalence as high as 50% in central Florida¹. Pinellas county reported 2 brucellosis cases in 2017 with 11 cases reported state-wide².



Brucellosis transmission occurs when open cuts or mucous membranes encounter body fluids or tissue infected with *Brucella* bacteria³. Symptoms include fever, headaches, chills, weight loss, and muscle/joint pain. The symptoms are non-specific and may not appear immediately, which can lead to misdiagnosis and underreporting. Brucellosis can result in severe health problems, including death, if not diagnosed and treated promptly³. If a patient complains of an unexplained recurring fever, providers should assess for possible exposure to feral swine.

There is no vaccine available for brucellosis in humans, so prevention relies on following certain safety practices. Hunters can protect themselves and their families from brucellosis by following these recommendations:

- **Wear protective gear:** Wear safety glasses, rubber gloves, and boots while hunting and butchering. Disinfect gear with a diluted bleach solution after each use.
- **Avoid direct contact with feral swine:** Do not touch the carcass with bare hands. Keep children away from the field dressing site. Dogs can contract brucellosis, so they should not eat raw meat or play with animal carcasses.
- **Safe field dressing methods:** Avoid visibly ill animals or those found dead. Prepare game using clean, sharp knives in an area with adequate ventilation and lighting. Do not eat, drink, smoke, or dip tobacco while processing meat.
- **Follow food safety tips:** Practice proper hand and surface hygiene before and after butchering. Separate raw game meat from other foods, chill raw and cooked game meat immediately, and cook game meat to an internal temperature of 160°F. Freezing, smoking, drying, and pickling do not kill *Brucella* bacteria.

More information on preventative steps for hunters can be found [here](#).

References:

¹Florida Department of Health. Brucellosis. <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/brucellosis/index.html>. Accessed October 2019.

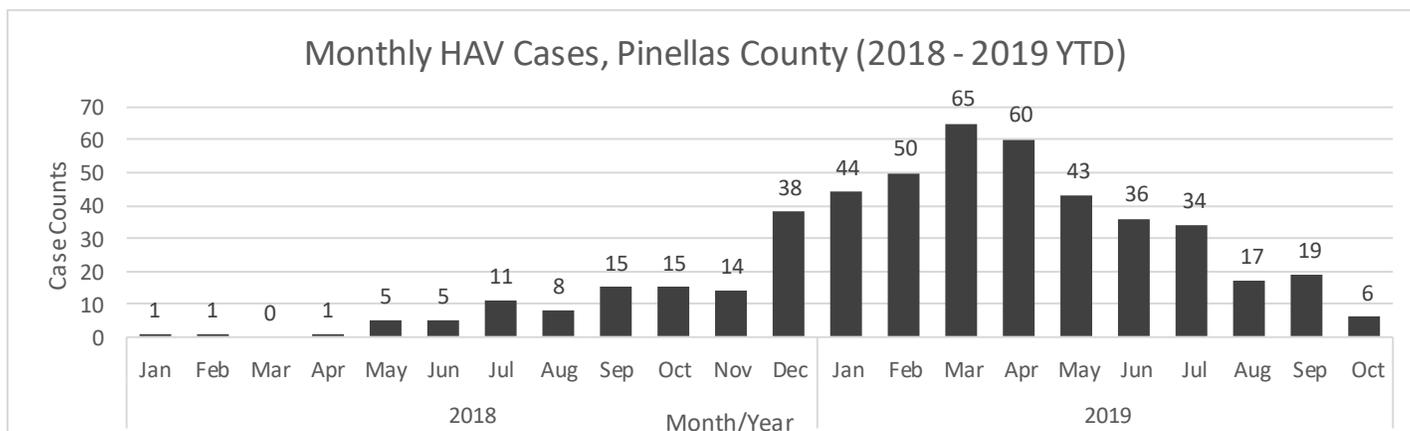
²Florida Department of Health. FLHealthCHARTS: Brucellosis. http://www.flhealthcharts.com/Charts/OtherIndicators/NonVitalIndNoGrpCountsDataViewer.aspx?cid=0170_. Accessed October 2019.

³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Brucellosis: Hunters Risks. <https://www.cdc.gov/brucellosis/exposure/hunters.html>. Accessed October 2019.

Hepatitis A Outbreak - Update

As of October 31, 2,962 cases of Hepatitis A have been reported in Florida in 2019. Pinellas and Pasco have remained two of the most impacted counties with 375 and 400 counts, respectively. Although rates appear to be declining, as shown in the graph below, response activities are ongoing and DOH-Pinellas will continue to monitor trends.

The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) continues to provide hepatitis A vaccinations and education to the community. Since January 2018, DOH-Pinellas has provided almost 20,000 vaccines to the community at outreaches, foot teams and clinics.



Health Advisories and Travel Notices

[CDC First Analysis of Lung Injury associated with e-cigarettes](#)

[CDC FLU Information](#)

[CDC Travel Health Notices](#)

Parts of the [Bahamas](#) continue to be affected following Hurricane Dorian in September .

[Venezuela](#) is experiencing outbreaks of infections as health infrastructure breakdown.

Polio outbreaks in [Philippines](#), [Ghana](#), [Benin](#), [Mozambique](#), [Nigeria](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Niger](#), [DRC](#), [Papua New Guinea](#), [Somalia](#), [Indonesia](#), [CAR](#), [Angola](#), and [Burma](#). Travelers are recommended to be fully vaccinated.

Opioid-related Overdoses and the ALTO Program

NUMBER OF PINELLAS COUNTY RESIDENTS WHO DIED FROM AN OPIOID-RELATED OVERDOSE



The opioid epidemic is a growing concern. On average, 130 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose¹. In Pinellas, more than one person dies every 37 hours from an opioid-related overdose².

Multiple programs and interventions have been developed to combat this epidemic including the wide-scale distribution of Naloxone, improving access to treatment, and communication between differing departments.

In 2016, St. Josephs Reginal Medical Center in New Jersey developed the Alternatives to Opioids program (ALTO). The treatment protocol is designed to limit the prescription of opioids as first-line medications for pain related ED visits via the use of non-opioid medications, trigger-point injection, nitrous oxide, and ultrasound-guided nerve blocks. After implementation, opioid use in the ED fell by 38 percent within 5 months³. In 2017, Colorado also developed an ALTO program that led to a 36 percent reduction in opioid use among 10 EDs over 6 months⁴.

For information on Opioid overdoses in Pinellas County, visit [Pinellas County's Opioid Task Force](#).

Click [here](#) for more information about the ALTO program treatment pathways.

¹CDC. Understanding the Epidemic. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/index.html>. Updated December 19, 2018. Accessed October 30, 2019.

²Pinellas County Opioid Taskforce. <http://pinellas-egis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=8c02b926f02c4498b1dda55f00e4a1aa>. Accessed October 30, 2019.

³Rosenberg, M. <https://www.aha.org/system/files/content/16/16behavhealthcaseex-stjosephs.pdf>. Accessed October 30, 2019.

⁴Colorado Hospital Association. <https://cha.com/opioid-safety/colorado-alto-project/>

Select Reportable Diseases in Pinellas County

Disease	Pinellas		YTD Total		Pinellas County Annual Totals		
	October 2019	October 2018	Pinellas 2019	Florida 2019	2018	2017	2016
A. Vaccine Preventable							
Measles	0	0	1	3	7	0	0
Mumps	0	0	6	186	10	3	0
Pertussis	0	7	26	328	32	36	18
Varicella	1	2	23	839	67	24	74
B. CNS Diseases & Bacteremias							
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)	0	0	3	24	1	2	2
Meningitis (Bacterial, Cryptococcal, Mycotic)	0	0	5	78	9	7	7
Meningococcal Disease	0	0	1	18	1	0	0
C. Enteric Infections							
Campylobacteriosis	23	22	255	3891	264	207	187
Cryptosporidiosis	2	4	54	549	34	40	27
Cyclosporiasis	0	0	28	533	4	6	5
<i>E. coli Shiga Toxin (+)</i>	0	3	20	700	15	22	14
Giardiasis	5	2	47	944	41	45	41
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Listeriosis	0	0	1	41	1	0	2
Salmonellosis	21	20	161	5943	233	279	213
Shigellosis	0	0	18	1202	40	26	19
D. Viral Hepatitis							
Hepatitis A	6	15	375	2962	113	1	2
Hepatitis B: Pregnant Woman +HBsAg	4	1	19	341	14	25	28
Hepatitis B, Acute	4	7	61	739	52	51	70
Hepatitis C, Acute	5	1	75	843	40	30	49
E. VectorBorne/Zoonoses							
Animal Rabies	1	0	2	108	1	3	3
Rabies, possible exposure	7	7	112	3695	130	140	131
Chikungunya Fever	0	0	0	8	0	0	1
Dengue	0	0	2	338	0	0	2
Eastern Equine Encephalitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lyme Disease	2	0	18	155	14	19	17
Malaria	0	0	5	43	3	0	0
West Nile Virus	0	0	0	6	0	0	0
Zika Virus Disease	0	1	3	2	2	5	23
F. Others							
Chlamydia	449	420	3865	n/a	4422	4188	4133
Gonorrhea	171	111	1232	n/a	1439	1574	1566
Hansen's Disease	0	0	0	21	0	0	0
Legionellosis	3	4	36	595	37	28	20
Mercury Poisoning	0	0	1	16	1	1	0
Syphilis, Total	46	40	419	n/a	438	382	400
Syphilis, Infectious (Primary and Secondary)	23	17	194	n/a	190	160	188
Syphilis, Early Latent	15	14	158	n/a	158	128	146
Syphilis, Congenital	0	0	5	n/a	2	5	2
Syphilis, Late Syphilis (Late Latent; Neurosyphilis)	8	9	62	n/a	88	89	64
Tuberculosis	1	5	19	n/a	33	28	31
<i>Vibrio Infections</i>	0	1	18	224	6	11	8

*YTD up to October 31, 2019. n/a = not available at this time

Reportable diseases include confirmed and probable cases only. All case counts are current and 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 STARS is continually updated. Please note, data from the previous month takes up to an additional month or more to be correctly updated.

FERAL SWINE HUNTERS



YOU MAY BE AT AN INCREASED RISK OF BRUCELLOSIS.

You can get brucellosis through contact with bodily fluids or tissues from an infected hog. Learn how to protect yourself and your family.

WEAR PROTECTIVE GEAR



- Safety glasses
- Gloves & boots
- Disinfect gear with diluted bleach solution

AVOID DIRECT SWINE CONTACT



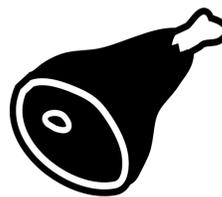
- Avoid bare hand contact
- Keep children & dogs away
- Dogs can transmit infection

SAFE FIELD DRESSING METHODS



- Avoid ill-appearing animals
- Clean, sharp tools
- Adequate ventilation & lighting
- Hand hygiene & cover wounds
- Proper waste disposal

FOLLOW FOOD SAFETY TIPS



- Disinfect surfaces
- Chill meat immediately
- Cook meat to 160°F
- Freezing, smoking, or drying does not kill brucellosis-causing bacteria



If you experience a flu-like illness within 1 week to 6 months after feral swine contact, tell your doctor about your hunt. Antibiotic treatment is available.

Visit Floridahealth.gov for more information