



EPI WATCH

Monthly Epidemiology Newsletter

December 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:

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Haemaphysalis longicornis

Haemaphysalis longicornis, a long-horned tick, has been identified in the United States. Originally discovered in 2017 on a sheep in New Jersey, it was later found in seven counties and an additional seven east coast states, including Arkansas in 2018¹. These ticks are originally from eastern Asia and are considered an important vector for certain human and animal diseases. The *H. longicornis* species is known to transmit the Severe Fever Thrombocytopenia Syndrome Virus (SFTSV) and *Rickettsia japonica* in both Japan and China¹.



Studies have shown *H. longicornis* can be infected with various species of *Anaplasma*, *Babesia*, *Borrelia*, *Ehrlichia*, and *Rickettsia*, which are all pathogens that circulate in the U.S.^{2,3}. Furthermore, these species can reproduce asexually, allowing a single female tick to increase progeny, causing infestations. Extensive surveillance is in place to detect *H. longicornis*, identify pathogens it harbors, and determine its effectiveness to serve as a vector for pathogens in the U.S.^{4,5}. Heightened surveillance entails both animal and environmental sampling methods.

All reports of *H. longicornis* in the U.S. are based on morphologic or molecular identification¹. There is no evidence that *H. longicornis* has transmitted any pathogens to humans, animals, or wildlife in the U.S. Public health and agricultural impacts are unknown at this time. You can visit [here](#) to learn more about protecting yourselves against tickborne diseases.

For more information, please visit: https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6747a3.htm?s_cid=mm6747a3_w

References:

- ¹Beard, C-B (2018). Multistate Infestation with the Exotic Disease-Vector Tick *Haemaphysalis longicornis*—United States, August 2017–September 2018. *MMWR*, 67.
- ²Luo L-M, Zhao L, Wen H-L, et al. *Haemaphysalis longicornis* ticks as reservoir and vector of severe fever with thrombocytopenia syndrome virus in China. *Emerg Infect Dis* 2015; 21:1770–6.
- ³Mahara F. Japanese spotted fever: report of 31 cases and review of the literature. *Emerg Infect Dis* 1997; 3:105–11.
- ⁴Kang J-G, Ko S, Smith WB, Kim H-C, Lee I-Y, Chae J-S. Prevalence of *Anaplasma*, *Bartonella* and *Borrelia* species in *Haemaphysalis longicornis* collected from goats in North Korea. *J Vet Sci* 2016; 17:207–16.
- ⁵Rosenberg R, Lindsey NP, Fischer M, et al. Vital signs: trends in reported vectorborne disease cases—United States and territories, 2004–2016. *MMWR Rep* 2018; 67:496–501.

World AIDS Day



The World AIDS Day took place on December 1 and represents an opportunity to show support to those fighting against HIV. In 2017, more than 38,000 people received an HIV diagnosis in the United States¹. Out of those who are living with HIV, 1 in 7 do not know their status^{2,3}. The CDC recommends that everyone between the ages of 13-64 get tested at least once. Sexually active gay and bisexual men are recommended to get tested at least every 3 to 6 months. The World's AIDS Day provides a great opportunity for people to get tested and know their status.

To learn more about this, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/features/worldaidsday/index.html>

References

- ¹Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). About HIV/AIDS. Webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/whatishiv.html>. Accessed on November 2018.
- ²World AIDS Day. Webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/awareness/wad.html>. Accessed on November 2018.
- ³HIV in the United States: At Glance. Webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/statistics/overview/ata glance.html>. Accessed on November 2018.

HALT THE SPREAD OF HEPATITIS A WITH

PREVENTION + PROTECTION

GOOD HYGIENE - WASH YOUR HANDS AFTER USING THE BATHROOM

GET THE HEPATITIS A VACCINE AT NO COST FOR A LIMITED TIME



Multistate Outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 Infections Likely Linked to Romaine Lettuce



Food Safety Alert

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), public health agencies, Canada and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are investigating nationwide outbreak of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 infections linked to romaine lettuce. As of December 6, a total of 52 cases linked to the outbreak strain have been identified in 15 states¹. The investigation identified as the likely source of this outbreak the romaine lettuce harvested from the Central Coastal growing regions of northern and central California. The CDC is advising consumers and retailers to not serve or sell any romaine lettuce harvested from these locations. If you are unsure of the harvesting location of your romaine lettuce, or any other product that may contain lettuce, it is strongly recommended that you throw them away. The CDC provides [these five steps](#) to clean the refrigerator in the case of food recalls.

Symptoms of *E. coli* infection vary from person to person, but usually include severe stomach cramps, diarrhea, and vomiting². Symptom onset may range from two to eight days after ingestion of the bacteria. Some infections may be mild, while others may be more severe and require hospitalization. Antibiotics are not recommended for patients with confirmed or suspected *E. coli* O157 infection, as some studies have shown that it might increase their risks of developing hemolytic uremic syndrome.

The investigation is ongoing and additional updates may be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/2018/o157h7-11-18/index.html>

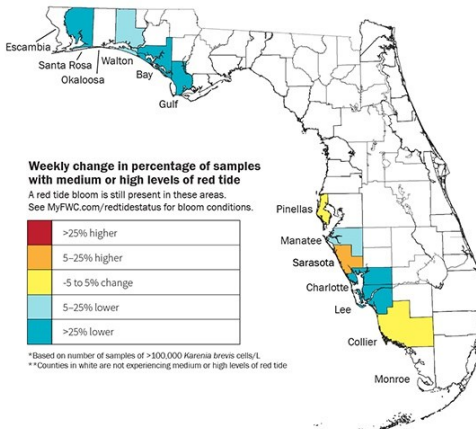
References:

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Outbreak of *E. coli*. Webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/2018/o157h7-11-18/index.html>. Accessed on November 2018.

²*Escherichia coli*. Webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/ecoli-symptoms.html>. Accessed on November 2018.

Update: Red Tide in Florida

Weekly Change: November 24 to 30



Red Tide occurs in Florida every year and can harm both marine life and humans. Florida's Red Tide is caused by *Karenia brevis*, which is a microscopic alga, commonly found in the Gulf of Mexico¹. These organisms produce brevetoxins, which can be harmful to animals and humans².

Brevetoxins from *K. brevis* can mix with airborne sea spray and move to land. Exposure to these brevetoxins can create eye, nose, and throat irritation³. Once a person leaves the area, these symptoms should go away. Swimming in areas with Red Tide is not recommended as individuals may experience skin irritation and burning eyes. Those with chronic respiratory problems should avoid areas with red tide³.

As of November 30, *K. brevis* concentrations continue to be patchy and range from not present to medium concentrations in Pinellas County. Compared to previous weeks, these concentrations are decreasing. Nevertheless, some moderate respiratory irritation levels were reported over the past week for Southwest Florida, including Pinellas County.

Ongoing monitoring is still taking place by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) remains in place.

For more information about red tide status, you can visit <http://myfwc.com/redtidestatus> and the [NOAA website](#).

References:

¹Red Tide FAQ. Webpage: <http://myfwc.com/research/redtide/faq/>. Accessed on November 2018.

²Red Tide Current Status. Webpage: <http://myfwc.com/redtidestatus>. Accessed on November 2018.

³National Ocean Service. Red Tide in Florida and Texas. Webpage: <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/news/redtide-florida/>. Accessed on November 2018.

Health Advisories and Travel Notices

[Polio in Niger](#)

[Dengue in Senegal](#)

[Measles in Israel](#)

[Listeria infections linked to pork products](#)

Select Reportable Diseases in Pinellas County

Disease	Pinellas		*YTD Total		Pinellas County Annual Totals		
	November 2018	November 2017	Pinellas 2018	Florida 2018	2017	2016	2015
A. Vaccine Preventable							
Measles	0	0	7	11	0	0	0
Mumps	0	0	2	52	2	0	0
Pertussis	7	1	32	311	35	18	17
Varicella	10	5	55	758	24	74	38
B. CNS Diseases & Bacteremias							
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)	1	0	1	20	2	2	3
Meningitis (Bacterial, Cryptococcal, Mycotic)	1	0	7	98	7	7	6
Meningococcal Disease	0	0	1	19	0	0	1
C. Enteric Infections							
Campylobacteriosis	24	13	249	4386	207	137	104
Cryptosporidiosis	2	4	33	551	40	27	49
Cyclosporiasis	0	0	4	73	6	5	3
<i>E. coli Shiga Toxin (+)</i>	0	0	13	729	9	3	2
Giardiasis	3	4	37	1026	45	41	30
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)	0	0	0	8	0	0	0
Listeriosis	0	0	1	43	0	2	2
Salmonellosis	21	19	206	6369	278	188	196
Shigellosis	1	0	38	1366	26	19	174
D. Viral Hepatitis							
Hepatitis A	14	0	75	414	0	2	4
Hepatitis B: Pregnant Woman +HBsAg	0	1	14	356	25	28	37
Hepatitis B, Acute	4	5	44	730	51	68	57
Hepatitis C, Acute	1	2	34	375	30	49	32
E. VectorBorne/Zoonoses							
Animal Rabies	0	0	4	127	2	4	1
Rabies, possible exposure	7	7	120	3662	140	131	114
Chikungunya Fever	0	0	0	6	0	1	2
Dengue	0	0	0	59	0	2	3
Eastern Equine Encephalitis	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Lyme Disease	1	1	11	150	17	11	6
Malaria	1	0	2	52	0	0	2
West Nile Virus	0	0	0	36	0	1	1
Zika Virus Disease	0	0	1	122	5		
F. Others							
Chlamydia	346	353	4089	n/a	4188	4133	4168
Gonorrhea	109	119	1333	n/a	1574	1566	1439
Hansen's Disease	0	0	0	16	0	0	0
Legionellosis	0	5	24	444	23	19	18
Mercury Poisoning	0	0	1	36	1	0	1
Syphilis, Total	32	18	386	n/a	382	400	289
Syphilis, Infectious (Primary and Secondary)	16	7	177	n/a	160	188	151
Syphilis, Early Latent	14	6	130	n/a	128	146	83
Syphilis, Congenital	0	0	2	n/a	5	2	3
Syphilis, Late Syphilis (Late Latent; Neurosyphilis)	2	5	77	n/a	89	64	52
Tuberculosis	0	1	27	n/a	28	31	14
<i>Vibrio Infections</i>	1	2	5	209	11	8	11

*YTD up to November 30, 2018. 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 Merin 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.