



# Epi Watch

A Monthly Epidemiology Newsletter



Division of Disease Control  
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To report diseases or request  
information call:

(Mon-Fri, 8-5, Area code 727):  
Epidemiology 824-6932  
Hepatitis 824-6932  
HIV/AIDS 824-6964  
Immunizations 824-6936  
STD 824-6911  
Tuberculosis 824-6953  
**Non-business hours 824-6900**

**Epi Watch** is a monthly newsletter  
produced and distributed by the  
Pinellas County Health Department  
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## AVIAN INFLUENZA

Maria Donnelly, MSPH

Avian influenza is caused by multiple influenza viruses. Avian influenza is primarily an asymptomatic illness of wild birds which can cause outbreaks among domesticated chickens, ducks and turkeys. The influenza type A H5N1 virus is of particular concern because it has caused human infections and may lead to an influenza pandemic. Human cases have been reported in Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and China. A majority of cases had close contact with infected poultry or contaminated surfaces. Symptoms are similar to other influenza viruses but may also include eye infections, pneumonia, and other severe sequelae. According to World Health Organization data, from December 2003 to date, the case fatality rate has been 51%. The virus is shed in the animal's feces, saliva and nasal secretions and has not been shown to be readily transmissible from person to person. Affected countries have increased their surveillance efforts, culled suspect flocks and banned transport of birds from infected areas. Global efforts are underway to bolster outbreak detection and notification.

If this novel strain does become transmissible from person to person, an influenza pandemic may result. Multiple federal, state and local agencies in the United States are actively preparing for this possibility. The Pinellas County Health Department is prepared with an influenza pandemic plan and is working closely with our community partners and the Florida Department of Health (FL-DOH). We have a strong influenza surveillance system in place which is used to monitor influenza activity throughout the county.

Physicians who suspect a patient may have contracted this illness because of compatible symptoms, animal contact and travel history should immediately telephone their local health department. Rapid identification of an index case is pivotal to prevention of additional cases. The FL-DOH is available to provide rapid and accurate diagnostic testing. Currently there is no immunization or treatment for H5N1 infection. Patients may respond to *oseltamavir* or *zanamavir* although no conclusive studies have been conducted.

When counseling patients on avian influenza the following points should be stressed:

- Through wildlife surveillance activities, the United States has not detected H5N1 in bird populations.
- This illness is not readily spread from person-to-person. Living conditions and agricultural practices in the United States are not conducive for zoonotic transmission.
- Reiterate the importance of immunization against circulating influenza strains. Endemic influenza affects 5-20% of the United States population and results in 200,000 hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths annually.
- Handwashing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle is effective in preventing illness. Staying home when sick and covering you nose and mouths when coughing or sneezing are effective measures to prevent the spread of illness.

Several excellent websites have information on influenza, surveillance and public health preparedness plans: the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov); the Federal government official avian and pandemic influenza site at [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov); the World Health Organization at [www.who.int](http://www.who.int). If you have any questions or would like to report a suspect case of avian influenza please call the Pinellas County Health Department at (727) 824-6932.

NA = Not Available

**Selected Reportable Diseases in Pinellas County**

Disease	2005 October	2005 Year-to-Date	2004 Year-to-Date	2004 Total
AIDS	3	126	129	211
Animal Bite, PEP Recommended	3	40	47	59
Animal Rabies		4	7	4
Arboviral Illness (Human):				
Dengue		4		
EEE				
SLE		2		
WNV	2	20		
CA/LaCrosse			1	1
Botulism				
Campylobacteriosis	5	37	41	46
Chlamydia	204	1,588	1,997	2,312
Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD)		2	1	2
Cryptosporidiosis	2	12	5	7
Cyclosporiasis		57		1
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7		2	2	2
Giardiasis	3	26	25	28
Gonorrhea	101	933	1,092	1,305
<i>H. influenzae</i> :				
Meningitis				
Pneumonia		1	1	1
Primary bacteremia	1	4	4	5
Epiglottitis			1	1
Hansen Disease		1		
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)		1		
Hepatitis, Acute Viral:				
A		8	10	12
B	3	28	37	48
C	1	6	13	14
Non-A, Non-B		1	5	5
Hepatitis B: Pregnant woman +HBsAg	1	26	24	26
HIV	15	196	211	238
Legionellosis	1	7	13	14
Listeriosis		1		
Lyme Disease	3	10	4	4
Malaria		1	4	4
Meningitis:				
Group B Strep			1	1
<i>S. pneumoniae</i>	1	5	1	1
Other bacterial		3	2	2
Meningococcal Disease		4	3	4
Mercury Poisoning			1	1
Mumps		1		
Pertussis	2	10	12	15
Plague (Bubonic & Pneumonic)				
Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever		1	1	1
Salmonellosis	34	153	140	170
Shigellosis	30	139	14	19
Smallpox				
<i>Streptococcal</i> disease, Inv. Group A		10	7	8
<i>S. pneumoniae</i> , Inv. disease (DR)	2	20	18	22
<i>S. pneumoniae</i> , Inv. disease (Suspect)	2	27	19	21
Syphilis:				
Total	2	49	60	126
Infectious (P and S)	1	28	27	49
Early Latent	1	21	33	39
Late Syphilis(Late Latent; Neurosyphilis)	2	14	21	38
Congenital				
Tuberculosis	1	20	31	35
<i>Vibrio</i> infections	2	5	8	10

Provisional cases reported by the Pinellas County Health Department. Blank cells indicate no cases reported.

For a complete list of reportable diseases and guidelines for reporting please visit:

[http://www.myflorida.com/disease\\_ctrl/epi/surv/lor8\\_4.pdf](http://www.myflorida.com/disease_ctrl/epi/surv/lor8_4.pdf)