



# Epi Watch

A Monthly Epidemiology Newsletter



Volume 7, Issue 1  
January 09, 2008

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**To report diseases by phone call:**  
**(727) 824-6932**

**To report diseases by fax**  
**(other than HIV/AIDS) use:**  
**(727) 820-4270**

*Epi Watch* is a monthly newsletter from the Pinellas County Health Department. For more information, or to add your e-mail address to the distribution list, please contact Andrea Dopico:  
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“The reason for collecting, analyzing and disseminating information on a disease is to control that disease. Collection and analysis should not be allowed to consume resources if action does not follow.”

*Foege, W.H. et al. (1976). Int. J of Epidemiology, 5:29-37.*

## SURVEILLANCE SUMMARY – 2007

### Disease Control Division and the Office of Public Health Preparedness

The prevention and control of communicable diseases continues to be a top priority for the Pinellas County Health Department (PinCHD). The PinCHD staff is committed to promoting, protecting and improving the health and safety of Pinellas County residents and visitors.

In the summer of 2007, the Epidemiology program investigated an outbreak of diarrheal illness in five children associated with a day camp with a petting zoo at a nature park in Pinellas County. An on-site investigation was conducted by PinCHD Epidemiology and Environmental Health staff. Four human isolates of *E.coli* O157:NM (nonmotile), nine animal isolates and four environmental isolates had an identical pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE) pattern. All five children recovered from their illness. The identification of the possible source of exposure and the recommendation to cease further animal contact, helped to prevent further illness at the camp.

### Syndromic Surveillance

In 2007, the STARS system was used to monitor hospital emergency room visits through May, at which point the system was retired due to server failure. Florida has adopted a new syndromic surveillance program, the Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-Based Epidemics (ESSENCE). ESSENCE analyzes electronically reported ICD-9 codes and hospital chief complaints by grouping them into syndromes, and monitors syndromes that are occurring more frequently than expected. Epidemiologists follow up with the hospitals to determine if an outbreak or other incidence of public health importance has occurred. The statewide adoption of ESSENCE enhances the ability of county health departments to track potential epidemics within their own county and across Florida. Bayfront Medical Center was the first hospital in Pinellas County added in late December 2007 and we look forward to working with all Pinellas County hospitals as they are integrated into the ESSENCE system in the coming year.

### Foodborne and Waterborne Illness

In 2007, the Food and Waterborne Illness Surveillance Program received 164 complaints from a total of 246 individuals. The majority of these complaints did not have a confirmed illness. Of the confirmed illnesses, there were: 17 cases of salmonellosis, 5 cases of campylobacteriosis, 2 cases each of *Vibrio* infections, *E. coli*, and Gastroenteritis, and 1 case each of cryptosporidiosis and hepatitis A. The complaints led to 58 investigations by health department specialists, most in conjunction with inspectors from the licensing agency of the establishment.

### Influenza

The end of 2007 marked the mid-way point in the current 2007-2008 influenza season. From the start of the Influenza season Sept 30 until the end of December 2007, there had been five cases of Influenza A reported by hospitals in Pinellas County. The levels of reported influenza-like illnesses in nursing homes and assisted living facilities have remained low (below 10 each week) thus far.

The Pinellas County Health Department thanks our community partners for their continued support and assistance in disease reporting and surveillance activities. We look forward to future enhancements of our investigation and surveillance activities.

# Selected Reportable Diseases in Pinellas County

Disease	2007 December	2007 Total	2006 Total
AIDS	13	171	220
Animal Bite, PEP Recommended	11	41	38
Animal Rabies		1	
Arboviral Illness (Human):		2	3
Dengue			
EEE			
SLE			
WNV		1	
CA/LaCrosse			
Campylobacteriosis	4	48	28
Chlamydia	340	3484	2961
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)	1	2	1
Cryptosporidiosis		15	9
Cyclosporiasis		1	
<i>E. coli O157:H7</i>		1	2
<i>E. coli</i> Shiga Toxin (+)		13	3
Giardiasis	3	27	37
Gonorrhea	145	1530	1646
<i>H. influenzae</i> :			
Meningitis			
Pneumonia		2	3
Primary Bacteremia		5	5
Epiglottitis			
Hansen's Disease		2	
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)			2
Hepatitis, Acute Viral:			
A		6	5
B	1	22	24
C		6	9
Hepatitis B: Pregnant Woman +HBsAg	2	33	27
Hepatitis, Chronic Viral			
B	27	265	186
C	197	1746	1581
HIV	20	254	173
Lead Poisoning:			
Total:		28	22
Children < 6 years:		6	6
Legionellosis		8	13
Listeriosis	1	1	2
Lyme Disease	2	12	3
Malaria		1	3
Meningitis:			
Group B Strep		5	2
<i>S. pneumoniae</i>	2	6	10
Other Bacterial	3	4	7
Meningococcal Disease	3	4	7
Mercury Poisoning			5
Mumps			
Pertussis		8	5
Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever		1	3
Salmonellosis	17	222	175
Shigellosis		39	19
Streptococcal Disease, Inv. Group A	1	15	16
<i>S. pneumoniae</i> , Inv. Disease (DR)	2	39	18
<i>S. pneumoniae</i> , Inv. Disease (Suscept)	1	24	25
Syphilis:			
Total	12	131	140
Infectious (P and S)	3	65	38
Early Latent	6	40	59
Congenital			
Late Syphilis (Late Latent; Neurosyphilis)	3	26	43
Tuberculosis	3	37	30
<i>Vibrio</i> Infections		11	6

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.doh.state.fl.us/disease\\_ctrl/epi/index.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/epi/index.html)