



# Epi Watch

A Monthly Epidemiology Newsletter



February 2011

**Pinellas County Health Department**  
 205 Dr. M.L King Street North  
 St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
 (727) 824-6900  
[www.PinellasHealth.com](http://www.PinellasHealth.com)

**Director**  
 Claude Dharamraj, MD, MPH, FAAP  
[claude\\_dharamraj@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:claude_dharamraj@doh.state.fl.us)

**Disease Control Division Director**  
 Patricia L. Ryder, MD, MPH  
[pat\\_ryder@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:pat_ryder@doh.state.fl.us)

**Epi Watch Editor**  
 Andrea M. Castillo, MPH  
[andrea\\_castillo@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:andrea_castillo@doh.state.fl.us)

**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 the Editor.

There have been some important changes made to the Rabies Post Exposure Protocol followed by the Pinellas County Health Department.

For details on these changes, please visit our website:  
[www.PinellasHealth.com](http://www.PinellasHealth.com)

*"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."*

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

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

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

## Rabies Possible Exposures Alazandria Cruze, MPH

Rabies is a serious and almost always fatal disease caused by a virus. Though rabies usually affects animals, humans are susceptible to the virus when bitten or scratched by an infected animal. The vast majority of rabies cases reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) each year occur in wild animals like raccoons, skunks, bats, and foxes. Since 1990, there have been 39 diagnosed cases of human rabies in the United States. Each year, between 16,000 and 39,000 people are treated for rabies possible exposures following animal bites and scratches. The US public health cost associated with rabies is approximately \$300 million a year.

Rabies-related deaths are uncommon in the United States but quite significant in other areas of the world, with more than 55,000 rabies-related deaths per year. Most of these deaths occur following bites from unvaccinated dogs.

A rabies possible exposure is classified as a bite, scratch or any other significant exposure to a human from the saliva of an animal that is either infected with or suspected of being infected with rabies. Any individual suffering from such an exposure should be evaluated for their need of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). All individuals that have been bitten or scratched by bats or raccoons, whether provoked or unprovoked, as well as stray cats or dogs in unprovoked attacks should be recommended for PEP.

Bite location is another important factor in PEP recommendation. High-risk bites or scratches are those that occur closer to the brain. Individuals that have experienced a possible rabies exposure and have never been vaccinated for rabies previously should receive PEP. For persons not previously immunized against rabies, human rabies immune globulin (HRIG) is given once. Four doses of rabies vaccine should be administered, one each on day 0, 3, 7, and 14. For individuals previously immunized against rabies, HRIG should not be given and only two doses of rabies vaccine should be administered, one on the day 0 and the second on day 3.

Individuals may wait on receiving the rabies vaccines if the animal has been captured and placed under quarantine or if the animal is a pet that can be monitored at home for ten days. In cases where the individual was bitten or scratched by an animal that cannot be found, PEP should be initiated and may later be stopped if the animal is found alive and well.

Simple steps should be taken by the public to protect themselves from animal bites and possible rabies exposure. These include not handling wild or unfamiliar animals, keeping their own animals vaccinated, and recognizing warning signs for sick animals and contacting animal control to appropriately deal with the animal.

***Alazandria Cruze was an intern from the University of South Florida who was assigned to the Pinellas County Health Department in the Fall of 2010. She obtained her MPH in December 2010.***

# Selected Reportable Diseases in Pinellas County

Disease	2011 January	2010 January	2010 Total
AIDS	8	11	129
Animal Rabies			
Arboviral Illness (Human):			1
Dengue			
EEE			
SLE			
WNV			
CA/LaCrosse			
Campylobacteriosis	6	1	37
Chlamydia	284	259	3842
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)			
Cryptosporidiosis	3	1	24
Cyclosporiasis			4
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7			
<i>E. coli</i> Shiga Toxin (+)	1		
Giardiasis	2	1	44
Gonorrhea	99	107	1329
<i>H. influenzae</i> :			
Invasive Disease	1	1	11
Hansen's Disease			1
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)			
Hepatitis, Acute Viral:			
A			2
B			8
C	2		11
Hepatitis B: Pregnant Woman +HBsAg	1	2	26
Hepatitis, Chronic Viral			
B	9	13	230
C	141	124	1498
HIV	10	18	215
Lead Poisoning: Children < 6 years:	1		3
Legionellosis			12
Listeriosis			1
Lyme Disease	1		9
Malaria	1		2
Meningitis:			
Bacterial, Cryptococcal, Mycotic			10
Meningococcal Disease			4
Mercury Poisoning			2
Mumps			1
Pertussis	1	1	10
Rabies, possible exposure		3	94
Salmonellosis	12	6	258
Shigellosis	11	1	47
Streptococcal Disease, Inv. Group A		1	6
<i>S. pneumoniae</i> , Inv. Disease (DR)	2	2	16
<i>S. pneumoniae</i> , Inv. Disease (Suscept)	1	2	15
Syphilis:			
Total	8	9	120
Infectious (P and S)	7	3	57
Early Latent		4	27
Congenital			
Late Syphilis (Late Latent; Neurosyphilis )	1	2	36
Tuberculosis		6	36
<i>Vibrio</i> Infections			12

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)