

EpiNews

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NORWALK-LIKE-VIRUS OUTBREAK AT AN ALF

Palm Beach County, June 2001

By Jim Masters, MPH, Program Specialist

The Health Department investigated the occurrence of an unusual number of illnesses at an Assisted Living Facility (ALF) that had 72 residents and 40 employees. There were a total of 53 persons who became ill and 4 persons hospitalized. The attack rate was 61% for residents and 22% for staff. The symptoms included 51 (96%) diarrhea, 43 (81%) vomiting, and 30 (57%) nausea. The onset dates ranged over a period of 11 days with a major peak of 13 new cases on day 3 and 4 with a minor peak of 5 cases on day 7. Two of the hospitalized residents tested negative for enterics and O&P and 1 tested negative for Norwalk-like-virus (NLV) and rotavirus. Six of the 8 specimen collected from ill residents at the ALF tested positive for NLV, G2 genetic type at the FDOH Tampa Laboratory. This outbreak was a reminder of the importance of having a protocol in place to recognize and respond to an unusual number of illnesses in an institutional like settings. The protocol should consider 1) identifying all ill residents and staff and keep a log with dates of onset, duration, symptoms, and room numbers 2) collect laboratory specimen from ill persons 3) initiate controls such as hand washing, gloving, masking, laundry handling, and sanitizing of hand rails and bathrooms 4) manage possible means of transmission related to social events, visitors, and dining area and 5) communication and other considerations related to transferring residents to and from facility.

MOSQUITO-BORNE VIRUS UPDATE

Florida's Second Human Case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis Confirmed

Medical Alert Extended to 30 Counties with Addition of Levy County

TALLAHASSEE—*The Florida Department of Health (DOH) announced today that the second human encephalitis case caused by the Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) virus has been confirmed. The case was reported in a 39-year-old male who was most likely exposed to the disease in Levy County. There have been two confirmed human cases of WN virus encephalitis and two confirmed cases of Eastern equine encephalitis.*

A previous medical alert issued by health officials for EEE and West Nile virus has now been extended to include Levy County. The alert is now in effect for 30 north Florida counties. The Department of Health urges all Floridians to take precautions against mosquito bites. DOH is recommending the following:

- Avoid outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are likely to be looking for blood meals;
- If you must be outdoors when mosquitoes are active, cover up by wearing shoes, socks, long pants and long-sleeved shirts;
- Use mosquito repellent containing DEET according to manufacturers directions; and
- Eliminate stagnant water in any receptacles in which mosquitoes might breed.

The Department of Health continues to track mosquito-borne viruses in dead birds collected by citizens. Physicians are urged to report all cases of encephalitis and meningitis to their local health department. Laboratory testing by the DOH is available to physicians free-of-charge. Animal surveillance for WN virus has detected 38 confirmed-positive dead birds, 31 horses, and 3 sentinel chickens all from counties covered by the medical alert. EEE virus surveillance has detected 20 confirmed-positive horses, none of which were reported in Levy county.

For more information on mosquito-borne encephalitis, including reporting human cases and dead birds, visit the DOH Bureau of Epidemiology's Arboviral Encephalitis and West Nile Virus website at MyFlorida.com (click on Health and Human Services, then Consumers – Diseases and Conditions, then Arboviral Encephalitis) or http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/epi/htopics/arbo/index.htm, or call the Bureau's hotline at 1-888-880-5782 for recorded information.

Steven T. Wiersma, Acting Chief, Bureau of Epidemiology and State Epidemiologist

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**Communicable Diseases and Selected Public Health Indices
Palm Beach County, Florida**

Enteric, Hepatitis, Meningitis, AIDS, HIV, STD, TB,
Live Births, Infant Deaths, Foodborne Outbreaks,
Childhood Lead Testing

2nd Quarter
April – June 2001

	Number This Qtr.	Number To Date This Yr.	Number to Date Last Yr.
Enteric, Hepatitis, Meningitis			
Campylobacteriosis	20	31	36
Shigellosis	3	10	10
Salmonellosis	33	55	61
Giardiasis	17	20	22
Hepatitis A	6	12	28
Hepatitis B	11	23	9
Meningitis & Invasive Disease due to Neisseria Meningitidis	1	1	4
Meningitis & Invasive Disease due to Haemophilus Influenzae	2	7	2
AIDS			
# New AIDS Cases Reported (Adult/Adolescent)	131	243	291
HIV***			
# HIV Tested	4520	8743	8198
# HIV Positive	168	293	324
% HIV Positive	3.7	3.4	4.0
STD			
Primary/Secondary Syphilis	10	18	24
Congenital Syphilis	1	2	0
Gonorrhea	214	418	523
Chlamydia	470	899	767
Tuberculosis			
Total Tuberculosis Cases	24	41	33
Total Tuberculosis Cases <15 Yrs. of Age	1	1	0
Live Births			
Total Infant Births	3147	6489	6378
Infant Births, White	2190	4474	4501
Infant Births, Non-White	965	2015	1868
Infant Deaths			
Total Infant Deaths	29	46	40
Infant Deaths, White	13	21	18
Infant Deaths, Non-White	16	25	22
Food Related Complaints and Outbreaks			
Number of Complaints	72	174	137
Suspected Foodborne Illness Outbreaks	3	10	9
Confirmed Foodborne Illness Outbreaks	0	1	1
Childhood Lead Testing			
Lead Poisoning (Venous Testing >=10)	12	20	24

Data provided is provisional

N/A = Not Applicable

***Data Representing PBCHD clients only

**Data Unavailable

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