

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

We are happy to announce that WE ARE BACK IN OUR BUILDING!

Division of Epidemiology and Disease Control
1050 15th Street West
Riviera Beach, FL 33404
Phone: (561) 840-4566
Fax: (561) 845-4496

Epidemiology Staff

Alina M. Alonso, MD
Assistant Director
Palm Beach County Health Department

Edwin Afamefuna, BS
Senior Human Services Program Analyst

JoEllen Alvarez, RN, MPH
Nursing Program Specialist/Coordinator

Ricardo R. Beato, MS
Human Services Program Consultant and
EpiCenter editor
Ricardo_Beato@doh.state.fl.us

M-Teresa Bonafonte, PhD, MPH, MS
Florida Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer

Judith M. Cobb, RN, MSPH
Community Health Nursing Consultant

Andre Erich Correa, MD
Senior Human Services Program Analyst

Antoinelle Hansley, RN
Senior Community Health Nurse

Vanessa P. Hightower
Staff Assistant/Coordinator

Barbara F. Johnson, RN, BSN
Senior Community Health Nursing Supervisor

Savita Kumar, MD, MSPH
Medical Epidemiologist/Consultant

Cynthia Lewandowski, RN, BS
Senior Community Health Nurse

Denise Pagán
Human Services Program Consultant and
EpiCenter editor
DeniseA_Pagan@doh.state.fl.us

Shamekia Powell
Senior Clerk

Ginger A. Stanley, BHS
Human Services Program Analyst

W - I - L - M - A!! Area Hospitals Assist in Post Hurricane Enhanced Surveillance

The Division of Epidemiology & Disease Control is grateful and would like to thank area hospitals (Infection Control Practitioners and Emergency Department Staff) who assisted the Palm Beach County Health Department (PBCHD) in the collection of information for Post Hurricane Enhanced Surveillance.

Hospitals were asked to submit the number of acute diarrhea illnesses and the number of acute respiratory illnesses (not exacerbations of existing conditions), deaths in emergency departments or deaths on arrival, cause of death, severe lacerations, severe injuries such as burns and fractures, carbon monoxide poisonings, car crashes, animal bites, and snake bites for the period of October 22, 2005, through November 23, 2005. (*Continued on page 3*)



Turtle Troubles

Palm Beach County Health Department Division of Epidemiology & Disease Control (Epi) recently investigated Salmonellosis cases involving pet turtles purchased in kiosks in various local malls and pet shops. Epi initially encountered some difficulty finding the appropriate agency to investigate the turtle vendors, even though such sales are illegal. Epi can now report turtle vendors involved in positive cases of Salmonellosis to the Food & Drug Administration (FDA). In a recent case, the FDA closed the turtle kiosk in the Wellington Mall because the investigation indicated that the child became ill after contact with a turtle purchased at that location.

Salmonellosis is an infectious disease caused by a bacteria. Most persons infected with Salmonella develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal pain 12 to 72 hours after exposure. The illness usually lasts 4 - 7 days, and most persons recover without treatment. In some persons, however, the diarrhea is so severe that they become dehydrated and require hospitalization. The elderly, infants, and those with impaired immune systems are most at risk for severe illness. (*Continued on page 3*)

Aaaachoo! It's NOT the Bird Flu, but Another 'Bug' Wrapped in Feathers

Palm Beach County Health Department, Division of Epidemiology & Disease Control recently investigated two cases involving sick cockatiels. Case #1 involved a cockatiel that was purchased at a Palm Beach County pet shop. The bird exhibited symptoms of respiratory illness at the time of purchase. The owner of the bird became ill with an upper respiratory infection 10 days after she bought the cockatiel. The owner and the bird were both treated with antibiotics and have recovered. The bird tested positive for Psittacosis. Psittacosis is a bacterial infection caused by *Chlamydia psittaci*. Inhaling dried droppings, and dust from feathers of infected birds transmits the infection. The incubation period is 5 to 19 days. Although all birds are susceptible, pet birds such as parrots, parakeets, macaws and cockatiels are frequently involved in transmission to humans. Symptoms in humans include fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and a dry cough. Pneumonia is often evident on chest x-ray. Psittacosis is a reportable disease in Florida.



Palm Beach County Health Department Division of Environmental Health investigated the pet shop where the bird was purchased and found no reports of other ill birds, although infected birds are often asymptomatic. The bird breeder, who sold the birds to the pet shop, however, did have other ill birds. The breeder agreed to stop selling birds to pet shops until all birds were tested for Psittacosis and treated if found positive for the illness.

Case #2 involved a 57 year-old with symptoms of chills, fever, body aches, and headache. He purchased a cockatiel in a Broward County pet shop a few weeks prior to becoming ill. Five days after purchase, the cockatiel died and soon after that, four other birds in the same cage died. The owner of the cockatiels became ill after cleaning the cage of the dead birds. He was referred to a Palm Beach County Health Department clinic for testing and treatment. Broward County Environmental Health investigated the pet shop where the sick cockatiel was purchased. It was never positively determined that Psittacosis was the cause of this individual's illness.

Name: _____
 Organization _____

Interested in Joining the CCC?
 Yes _____, Not at this time _____

We are developing educational materials using different forms of media, please assist us by indicating the media format you would prefer to use:
 Video _____, DVD _____, Other _____

Address _____

 City, State, Zip Code _____

 Phone _____
 Fax _____
 Email _____

If you would like to join the CCC or just simply indicate your media preferences, please return the form by fax or U.S. mail.
 Epidemiology and Disease Control
 1050 West 15th Street
 Riviera Beach, FL 33404
 Ph: 561-840-4566
 Fax: 561-845-4496

Coalition on Cultural Communication (CCC) Looking for New Members



During the 2003 malaria outbreak in Palm Beach County, many of the educational messages on prevention and treatment of malaria failed to reach large segments of the county's diverse population. New sets of simple, culturally meaningful educational materials specifically targeting immigrant and non-English speaking populations were needed. In response, the Palm Beach

County Health Department Division of Epidemiology & Disease Control established the Coalition on Cultural Communication (CCC). The mission of the CCC is to develop and distribute culturally sensitive and effective health and safety educational materials for immigrant and non-English speaking residents of Palm Beach County.

Malaria was the original health issue addressed, but the focus has broadened and the CCC is in the process of producing a health promotion video/DVD regarding general good health habits and a mosquito bite prevention video/DVD. Both video and DVD will be in simple English, Spanish, and Creole. The video/DVDs will be shown at various community outreaches/events and will be available free of charge to the community.

The CCC invites you to become an active coalition member in order to address **your** group or agency's specific needs in all future health promotional materials. The CCC is comprised of various community leaders, agencies and individuals, including the Palm Beach County Health Department, the Palm Beach County Library System, the Palm Beach County Literacy Coalition, Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies, Hugs for Kids and the Area Agency on Aging. Your membership in this coalition is invited and encouraged. To join, simply fill out the attached form and return it by fax or U.S. mail. Your voice can be heard in developing appropriate language and reading level health education materials for your specific population.

Wilma continued from page 1...

The PBCHD also conducted post hurricane surveillance in shelters, PBCHD clinics, walk-in medical centers, and some pediatricians' offices in the Belle Glade area. Below is information collected from the hospital surveillance.

Please NOTE: "Total injuries reported by hosp." is <u>not</u> a sum total of all injuries computed; it is, in fact, the "total severe injuries" literally reported by the hospital.		# of Diarrhea	# of Respiratory	# of Deaths	Total Injuries Reported by Hosp.	Fractures	Lacerations	Burns	CO Poisoning
10/22/2005	Saturday	9	11	0	29	2	22	0	0
10/23/2005	Sunday	4	15	0	23	6	35	0	3
10/24/2005	Monday	9	9	0	102	20	86	1	1
10/25/2005	Tuesday	15	51	3	92	11	84	4	15
10/26/2005	Wednesday	11	34	1	33	3	67	3	5
10/27/2005	Thursday	22	32	1	22	17	35	0	6
10/28/2005	Friday	19	38	1	13	32	59	4	6
10/29/2005	Saturday	11	45	0	40	6	62	3	0
10/30/2005	Sunday	14	25	0	9	5	51	3	3
10/31/2005	Monday	28	23	0	7	2	79	3	0
11/1/2005	Tuesday	13	20	0	6	4	49	0	0
11/2/2005	Wednesday	13	20	0	6	4	49	0	0
11/3/2005	Thursday	4	13	0	3	4	39	0	2
11/4/2005	Friday	1	15	0	8	4	21	2	4
11/5/2005	Saturday	9	15	0	0	17	43	5	0
11/6/2005	Sunday	7	21	0	2	20	49	4	0
11/7/2005	Monday	8	15	0	1	9	28	1	0
11/8/2005	Tuesday	8	23	2	0	6	25	3	0
11/9/2005	Wednesday	8	14	0	3	3	27	1	0
11/10/2005	Thursday	7	20	2		7	27	3	0
11/11/2005	Friday	12	17	0	4	8	28	1	0
11/12/2005	Saturday	2	16	1	1	14	42	1	0
11/13/2005	Sunday	9	14	1	2	10	31	0	0
11/14/2005	Monday	5	16	0	4	6	24	0	0
11/15/2005	Tuesday	6	17	0	8	11	15	2	0
11/16/2005	Wednesday	4	10	1	1	8	19	9	0
11/17/2005	Thursday	2	15	0	3	11	12	4	0
11/18/2005	Friday	9	5	0	3	6	12	0	0
11/19/2005	Saturday	13	7	0	2	2	14	0	0
11/20/2005	Sunday	7	17	2	1	5	7	2	0
11/21/2005	Monday	8	12	3	5	3	25	3	0
11/22/2005	Tuesday	4	11	1	2	5	19	0	0
11/23/2005	Wednesday	7	10	1	1	5	12	2	0
Grand Totals		299	615	20	407	274	1175	64	45

Death Totals=21. Cause of Death: Cardiac Arrest=18; Respiratory Arrest=1; Boat Accident=1; Unknown=1. Note: One of these deaths was determined by the Medical Examiner to be due to Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

Turtles Troubles continued from page 1...

The Salmonella organism live in the intestinal tracts of humans and other animals. Salmonella can be transmitted to humans by ingesting foods contaminated with animal or human feces. It may also be transmitted by coming in contact with the feces of some pets, especially reptiles, lizards, and turtles.

In order to prevent transmission of Salmonella, people should wash their hands after contact with animals and animal feces. Since reptiles are particularly likely to have Salmonella, everyone should immediately wash their hands after handling reptiles. Reptiles, including turtles, are not appropriate pets for small children and should not be in the same house as an infant.