



Microbe Monthly

Communicable Disease Report

May 2008

El Paso County Department
of Health & Environment (EPCDHE)

Possible Measles Resurgence in United States

Measles, a highly contagious acute viral disease, can result in serious complications and death. As a result of a successful U.S. vaccination program, measles elimination was declared in the U.S. in 2000. The number of reported measles cases has declined from 763,094 in 1958 to fewer than 150 cases reported per year since 1997. During 2000-2007*, annual reported measles cases ranged from 29-116, with a mean of 62 (*Based on *MMWR* surveillance summaries, 2000-2006, and CDC unpublished provisional data as of December 31, 2007). However, from January 1—April 25, 2008, a total of 64 confirmed measles cases were preliminarily reported to CDC, representing the most reported cases for the same time period in any year since 2001. Cases have been reported from 9 states (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin), and outbreaks are ongoing in 4 states (Arizona, Michigan, New York and Wisconsin). All of the 64 cases represent either direct importation of measles (n=10) or are indirectly related to importation of measles from other countries into the U.S. (n=54). **Sixty-three of the 64 cases were unvaccinated or had unknown vaccination status.** The 64 cases ranged in age from 5 months to 71 years; 22% were less than 12 months of age and 67% were under 20 years of age. Fourteen (22%) of patients were hospitalized; no deaths have been reported. Transmission has occurred in community and health care settings—including homes, child care centers, schools, hospitals, emergency rooms and physicians' offices.

Since 1998, Colorado has had 4 cases of measles: two in 2000, one in 2004 and one in 2006. No cases occurred in El Paso County. The last report of confirmed measles in El Paso County occurred in 1992, when two separate outbreaks resulted in 29 cases. In 2008, there have been two El Paso County residents who were potentially exposed to measles in Arizona; both patients reported being immunized and have not developed measles. **Any suspect measles case should be immediately reported to the El Paso County Department of Health and Environment at 719-578-3220.**

Additional information about measles can be found at: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/measles/default.htm and www.vaccineinformation.org/measles/photos.asp

“These cases and outbreaks serve as a reminder that measles can and still does occur in the U.S. Ongoing measles virus transmission was declared eliminated in the U.S. in 2000, but the risk of cases and outbreaks from imported disease remains.”

CDC. Measles in United States, January 1—April 25, 2008. *MMWR* Early Release. May 1, 2008; 57.

El Paso County Disease Trends

- In April, 50 communicable disease cases were reported, including cases of **campylobacter** (3), **giardia** (8), **chronic hepatitis B** (4), **influenza-hospitalized** (6), **viral meningitis** (1), **salmonella** (4), **invasive pneumococcal disease** (5) and **varicella** (19).
- **Influenza** in Colorado declined during April, and by mid-month our state was reporting only “sporadic” activity to the CDC. Season totals for influenza hospitalization as of the end of April were **994** for Colorado and **152** for El Paso County; approximately 59% were type A and 41% type B. Flu activity this season was higher than the previous three seasons. The higher case numbers this season are likely due, in part, to suboptimal effectiveness of this year's vaccine against type B disease.
- The Health Department's Communicable Disease Program received 17 possible **foodborne illness complaints** during April, and investigated 3 suspect **norovirus outbreaks** in long-term care facilities (LTCF) and 2 **foodborne outbreaks** (etiology unknown) associated with retail food establishments. Through April 2008, there have been 26 illness outbreaks reported in El Paso County: 8 influenza in LTCF; 8 norovirus/GI in LTCF; 9 GI associated with retail food establishments and 1 in a school sports team.

Hot Topics—State and National

- In the last year, a total of six specimens (5 skunks and 1 coyote) have tested positive for rabies in areas throughout the state. Of those six, the coyote and 4 skunks were positive for the skunk rabies variant. Counties with positive specimens are: Prowers (2), Washington (1), Mesa (1), Las Animas (1) and Kit Carson (1). Based on this information, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment believes that skunk rabies may have reestablished in eastern areas of the state and potentially is moving west toward the Front Range. The establishment of endemic rabies in a terrestrial wildlife reservoir, especially in the urban Front Range, would have enormous public health repercussions. The following is a link to the CDC's updated recommendations for Human Rabies Prevention and management of potential exposure to rabies virus. May 7, 2008 / 57(Early Release); 28. www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr57e507a1.htm
- **MMWR: Interim Within-Season Estimate of the Effectiveness of Trivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccine.** This report summarizes **interim results** of a 2008 case-control study to estimate vaccine effectiveness (VE) of trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine for prevention of medically attended, laboratory-confirmed influenza during the 2007-08 influenza season. Overall VE was 44%; VE for influenza type A H3N2 was 58% and VE for influenza type B was zero. For a full report go to: www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5715a1.htm

Contact Information

CD/TB Program
Weekday Hours 719-578-3220
After Hours Emergency 719-385-9622

Immunizations 719-578-3272

Environmental Health 719-575-8636

STD Program 719-578-3296

(Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Hepatitis C, HIV/AIDS, Blood-borne Exposures)

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Weekday Hours 303-692-2700
After Hours 303-370-9395