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Henrico Health Department's Newsletter

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with the citizens of
Henrico County to create
the conditions for health.

February
2009
Volume 5
Issue 2

Communicable Diseases

Henrico Roundup:

Overview – This past month Henrico Health Department continued to see reports of increased influenza activity in the area, as well as gastrointestinal illness in institutional and school settings. The health department also received reports of sporadic cases of shigellosis, salmonellosis and invasive Group A Streptococcal disease.

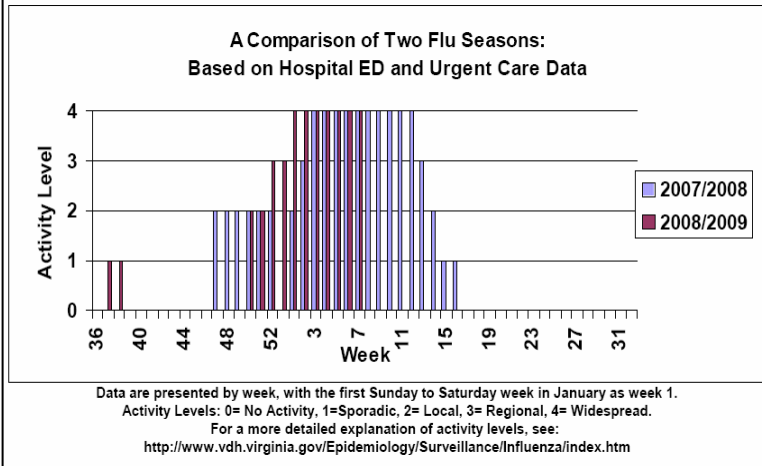
Updated Website- For resource information on pertussis, seasonal influenza, rabies PEP and other topics, please visit us at www.publichealthbytes.org. The links are found under Current Public Health Topics in the lower half of the webpage.

Seasonal Influenza:

Surveillance -Virginia 2008/2009 Influenza Surveillance Activity Level: **WIDESPREAD** (for week ending 2/21/2009). The Virginia Department of Health has developed a “Mid-Season Influenza Report” with a comprehensive look at influenza outbreaks, antiviral resistance and geographic trends in influenza activity in Virginia. The report is available here: http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/Epidemiology/Surveillance/Influenza/Mid-Season_Influenza_Report.pdf

Flu Reporting- Please report lab confirmed cases of influenza to the health department weekly on an Epi-1 form (fax 501-4232) **as number of cases only**. Epi-1 forms should not be completed for each individual patient. Please report the type of influenza (A, B) if it is available, as well as the timeframe (e.g., week of 2/22/09-2/28/09). The influenza reporting section can be found on the upper right side of the Epi-1 form. Call us at 501-4522 to request Epi-1 forms, or download them at: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/Epidemiology/documents/pdf/epi1.pdf>

The graph below compares Virginia's weekly flu activity for the 2007-08 and the 2008-09 influenza seasons. Last season, flu activity was reported as “widespread” for weeks ending 1/19/08 to 3/22/08.



Henrico Updates

Departure and well wishes- Dr. Levine wishes to thank you all for your assistance and support of *Public Health Bytes* over the years. He has accepted the position of Deputy Commissioner of Emergency Preparedness and Response for VDH. He has started this new role this month and looks forward to working with you in this new capacity.

Pandemic Flu - ALERT PHASE WHO: 3; US: 0

Pandemic/Avian Flu Update: Human Cases –In February 2009, new human H5N1 infections were confirmed in China (1 case), Egypt (2 cases) and Vietnam (2 cases). No deaths were reported during this interval. All reported cases had known contact with sick and/or dead poultry. Of the 408 human H5N1 cases reported by fifteen countries between 2003 and 2009, 254 were fatal (62.3%).

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Preparedness: Thanks to everyone who participated in the ESF-8 Working Group meeting - your feedback was invaluable! The next ESF-8 meeting will be on May 14, 2009 at 8am. Some key points from this meeting:

1. Emergency readiness is a continuing cycle: as you experience personnel turnover, please be sure that your emergency response plans are part of your normal orientation, training and exercises, and that new contact information is provided to your fellow response agencies.
2. During an emergency, the health department will likely rely on other organizations to provide key resources, e.g., medical equipment, supplies and professional expertise. Future collaboration will focus on identifying resources in the community.

Henrico's Medical Reserve Corps (MRC): Thanks to all Henrico MRC volunteers who participated in the MRC training this month and to Mr. Bill Jones, CERT fire trainer for his excellent presentation. The next MRC training will be Wed., March 25, 2009, at the Henrico Human Services Building, 8600 Dixon Powers Drive at 6pm. For more info: www.co.henrico.va.us/health/mrc.html

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