

Public Health Brief

A Newsletter on Current Public
Health Topics



Serving Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties

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****Please Note: The TCHD Communicable Disease
after-hours contact number has changed to 720-200-1486****

You have received this message based upon the information contained within our Health Alert Network Notification System. If you have a different or additional e-mail or fax address that you would like us to use or if you have additional questions, please call 720-200-1477.

Categories of Health Alert Network Messages:

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Info Service/Public Health Brief: Provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.

You may download a copy of this HAN from the TCHD website at
<http://www.tchd.org/259/Health-Alert-Network>

Disease Highlight: Hepatitis A outbreak response

Since the beginning of September and as of Dec. 9, 2018, El Paso County has had six reported cases of hepatitis A in adults who are experiencing homelessness and/or report street drug use. None of the cases reported traveling outside of the county during their exposure period so spread of disease is likely occurring locally.

Numerous large hepatitis A outbreaks are occurring around the U.S. that are impacting people experiencing homelessness or using street drugs, and men who have sex with men. TCHD is working with local service providers for people experiencing homelessness and people who use drugs.

TCHD is also working with the state health department, other local public health agencies, community partners and law enforcement to collaborate on outreach and vaccination clinics and campaigns in the Denver metro area.



You can help by:

1. Promoting vaccination for people at high risk, such as people experiencing homelessness, people using street drugs, or for men who have sex with men, who are unvaccinated or do not know their vaccination status. Free hepatitis A vaccine is available at local public health agencies for people experiencing homelessness, people using street drugs, or people who are uninsured or underinsured. Click [HERE](#) for information about TCHD's Immunization Program.
2. Referring clients with symptoms of hepatitis A for medical evaluation and hepatitis A testing.
3. Reporting any suspect case of hepatitis A to public health within one working day to ensure disease control measures are promptly put into place.
4. Promoting prevention of hepatitis A through outreach materials at your location. Click [HERE](#) for more information on Hepatitis A resources and to download posters and flyers. Please contact TCHD if you would like printed copies of outreach materials.

Hot Topic: Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM)

AFM is a rare condition that affects the nervous system, specifically the spinal cord. It has a variety of causes, including viral infections such as enteroviruses, adenoviruses, and West Nile virus. A person who appears to have a sudden onset of weakness in the arms or legs should be evaluated by a health care provider.



AFM is a reportable condition in Colorado and during 2018 there were 15 cases. Twelve of 15 cases of AFM tested positive for [enterovirus A-71 \(EV-A71\)](#) and all of the AFM cases have tested negative for poliovirus. EV-A71 is a less-common type of enterovirus in the United States and usually causes mild illness but it can also cause serious illnesses like muscle spasms, meningitis, encephalitis, and AFM. As of 10/30/18, Colorado has identified 42 cases of neurologic illness in children who tested positive for EV-A71. Go to the CDPHE [website](#) for more information.

Seasonal: Norovirus

Norovirus causes acute gastroenteritis and is commonly accompanied by diarrhea and/or vomiting. Though you can get norovirus any time of the year, most outbreaks in the United States occur between November and April. Norovirus

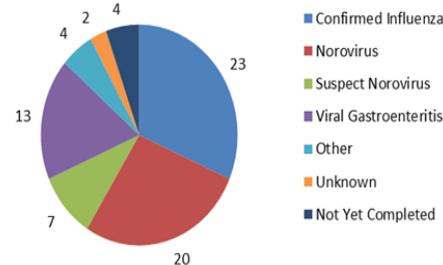


is extremely contagious and the best way to prevent the spread is through proper hand hygiene with soap and water. Additionally, any individual diagnosed with or suspected of having norovirus should remain out of childcare, school, or work until at least 48 hours after symptoms stop. During 2017, norovirus and other acute gastroenteritis illnesses accounted for 50% of the outbreaks reported in the TCHD jurisdiction. The majority of these outbreaks occurred in childcare centers and long-term care facilities. All suspect outbreaks should be reported to the health department within 24 hours to allow prompt public health action. To report an outbreak in Adams, Arapahoe or Douglas County, call 720-200-9200 and ask for someone in communicable disease. Visit the CDC's [webpage](#) on norovirus to learn more!

Did you know?

- *Salmonella* causes about 1.2 million illnesses, 23,000 hospitalizations, and 450 deaths in the United States every year? Click [HERE](#) for more information!
- Flu and norovirus are the most frequently reported outbreaks in 2018 in Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties

Number of Outbreaks Investigated by TCHD by Pathogen (n=73), January 1, 2018 - October 31, 2018



Our TCHD after hours contact number has changed!
Please update your contacts to the new number:
720-200-1486



EVERYONE 6 MONTHS OF AGE AND OLDER SHOULD GET A FLU VACCINE EVERY SEASON.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

Contact Information

To report suspect outbreaks or reportable conditions to Tri-County Health Department:
Call Communicable Disease at:
(303) 220-9200
After hours: (720) 200-1486