



**Palm Beach County Health Department
Division of Epidemiology & Disease Control
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New Name, New Look

The Palm Beach County Health Department Division of Epidemiology & Disease Control has been publishing **EpiNews** as an update of current health issues, disease outbreaks, and trends in our community. The staff of **EpiNews** has selected a new name for the publication in an effort to better communicate our epidemiological function. The new name, **EpiCenter**, emphasizes that our division is one of the vital centers for disease control and investigation in Palm Beach County. We hope the new name and new look will be a welcome addition to the real issue of disseminating disease control information to our community.

Community Acquired Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)

Palm Beach County Health Department (PBCHD) Division of Epidemiology & Disease Control has been investigating an outbreak of community acquired methicillin-resistant *staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) skin infection in a local jail. The facility initially treated the wounds as "spider bites". PBCHD forwarded MRSA educational information to the facility and encouraged their health services administration to follow Bureau of Prisons Clinical Practice Guidelines for the management of MRSA. PBCHD emphasized the importance of infection control procedures by medical personnel and infection control education for employees and inmate population.

During this outbreak 33 culture reports were received by the PBCHD with 31 identified as MRSA. Thirty of these were also resistant to erythromycin. The most common antibiogram of community associated MRSA in Florida notes resistance to methicillin and erythromycin, as well as sensitivity to all other classes of antibiotics.

MRSA has emerged in recent years as a frequent cause of skin and soft tissue infection in communities. The Palm Beach County Health Department is advising physicians to consider MRSA as a possible diagnosis when evaluating skin lesions and to culture accordingly. MRSA is not a reportable disease in Florida. MRSA outbreaks, however, are reportable. Call (561) 840-4566 to report a MRSA outbreak or to request MRSA educational material.

Rabies Continues in Palm Beach County

On February 19, 2004 Animal Care and Control captured a rabid raccoon in a Boynton Beach home. This is the seventh rabid raccoon captured in Palm Beach County this year.

Rabies is a deadly viral disease that can be prevented but not cured. Rabies pre/post-exposure prophylaxis is administered as a preventative measure.

It is vital that, as residents of Palm Beach County, we encourage other residents to not leave food for domestic animals outside, do not feed stray or wild animals, and keep animal access doors locked when they cannot be monitored.

Domestic animals, such as cats and dogs, who are of over four months of age are required to be vaccinated against rabies and wear a current rabies license tag.

**Reportable Communicable Diseases And Other Conditions
Palm Beach County, Florida
October 1 – December 31, 2003**

Disease/Condition	Cases During Oct. to Dec. 2003	Cumulative Cases For 2003	Cumulative Cases Same Time Last Year
Invasive Haemophilus influenzae disease	3	18	17
Meningococcal infections	0	4	10
Streptococcus pneumoniae meningitis	0	3	6
Streptococcus pneumoniae-drug resistant-invasive	10	37	49
Encephalitis, St. Louis	0	0	0
Encephalitis, chickenpox	0	0	0
Measles	0	0	0
Mumps	0	0	0
Rubella	0	0	0
Tetanus	0	0	0
Pertussis	4	5	1
Hepatitis A	6	21	37
Hepatitis B, acute	21	51	31
Hepatitis C, acute	0	0	0
Salmonellosis	75	260	277
Shigellosis	56	149	71
Campylobacteriosis	23	111	66
Giardiasis	15	77	62
Cryptosporidiosis	6	9	5
Cyclosporiasis	0	3	10
Typhoid fever	1	3	2
Escherichia coli O157:H7	1	5	3
Vibrio infections	5	12	7
Animal rabies	11	39	27
Human exposure to a potentially rabid animal	28	110	98
Animal bites/exposure of a human - number reported to Animal Care and Control	626	2579	2458
Legionellosis	5	19	9
Lead poisoning	20	122	87
Malaria	2	15	8
Dengue fever	0	0	2
Lyme disease	1	5	6
Ciguatera	0	3	1

Data provided is provisional
N/A = Not Applicable
**Data Unavailable

For Information - Please call (561) 840-4564
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