



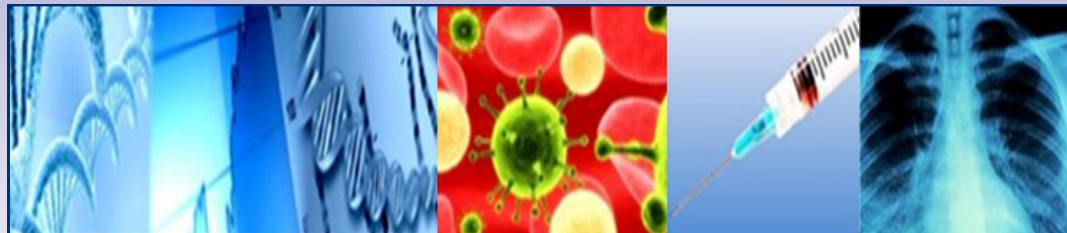
Department of Public Health

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SECTION

Quarterly Newsletter

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Prepare For The Flu Season

Influenza or flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, hospitalization, and at times can lead to death. In the 2014-2015 influenza season, 15 ICU hospitalizations and 5 deaths occurred within the County.

The best way to prevent influenza is by getting a flu vaccination each year. As the first step for protection against the flu, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health recommends everyone six months of age and older get a flu vaccine every flu season. Flu seasons are unpredictable and can begin as early as October. Vaccination should begin soon after the vaccine becomes available, if possible by October. It takes approximately two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body

and provide protection against influenza. Based on previous flu vaccination history, children aged 6 months through



8 years may be required to receive two doses. They should receive their first dose as soon as possible and the second dose at least four weeks after the first dose. There are several different types of flu vaccine available. The CDC does not have a preferential recommendation for one vaccine over another.

A seasonal flu vaccine is especially recommended for the following high risk groups: infants and young children, people 50 years of age and older, pregnant women, people of any age with chronic medical conditions (including diabetes and asthma), people who live in nursing homes and long-term care facilities, home caregivers and health care workers.

Additional preventative methods to help avoid getting flu and other respiratory infections include: washing your hands frequently, covering your cough with a sleeve or a tissue, and staying home if you are sick.

To schedule an appointment to receive the flu vaccine at a Department of Public Health Clinic, call 1-800-722-4777.

Reminder of Healthcare Worker Influenza Vaccination Order

From: Maxwell Ohikhuare, MD
Health Officer

On September 18, 2014, Dr. Maxwell Ohikhuare, M.D., San Bernardino County Health Officer, issued an influenza vaccination order to all County healthcare workers. This order still remains in effect, is ongoing and applies to each influenza season unless rescinded.

This order applies to all licensed healthcare facilities in San Bernardino County to include: hospitals, ambulatory care, skilled nursing and long term care facilities.

To view the original Healthcare Worker influenza vaccination order, visit:
<http://1.usa.gov/1NMF8Wz>.

To view the frequently asked questions pertaining to this order, visit:
<http://1.usa.gov/1LAURWI>.

Thank you for all of your continued efforts to minimize the spread of communicable diseases like influenza, providing excellent healthcare for our community and keeping our healthcare workforce healthy.

For more information, contact the Department of Public Health, at (909) 387-6218, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



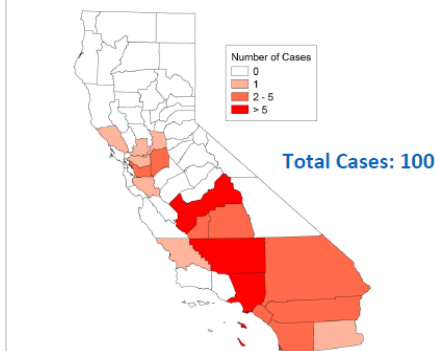
Congenital Syphilis on the Rise

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) announced increases in syphilis cases among women and newborns over the past two years. From 2012 to 2014, the number of women with early syphilis in California increased from 248 cases to 594. During the same time period, the number of congenital syphilis cases increased from 30 to 100. Syphilitic stillbirths also increased from one case in 2012 to six cases in 2014. Early syphilis cases among San Bernardino County women also increased from six in 2012 to 24 in 2014. The number of County infants born with congenital syphilis increased from one in 2012 to four in 2014.

CDPH has not identified a cause for the increase, however the disease is often associated with poverty and lack of access to health care. Most of the mothers of the congenital syphilis cases did not receive appropriate prenatal care.

California law requires all pregnant women be screened for syphilis at their

Congenital Syphilis in Infants < 1 Year of Age, Number of Cases by County, California, 2014



first prenatal visit and if high risk, be retested for syphilis between 28 and 32 weeks gestation and at delivery. Women are considered to be high risk who: have signs and symptoms of syphilis, live in areas with high rates of syphilis, receive late or limited prenatal care, did not get tested in the first or second trimester, have partners who have other partners including male partners, are

involved with drugs, or are sex workers.

All positive screening tests should be confirmed. Infants should not be discharged from the hospital unless the syphilis serologic status of the mother has been verified. Any woman who delivers a stillborn fetus after 20 weeks gestation should be tested for syphilis. Pregnant women who are seropositive should be considered infected unless they have documentation of adequate treatment with appropriate serologic response to treatment and titers that are low and stable. If needed, the Public Health Department can assist in verifying if a woman's treatment was adequate. California law requires all syphilis infections be reported to Public Health within 24 hours of diagnosis. To report a syphilis case, call the Communicable Disease Section at 800-722-4794 and ask for a communicable disease investigator. Reports may also be faxed to (909) 387-6377.

New School Immunization Law– Senate Bill 277

In 2014, Assembly Bill (AB) 2109, a California law that modified the process for obtaining exemptions to one or more immunizations required for child care or school, based on personal beliefs, required documentation that health care practitioners inform parents about vaccines and diseases. This law will be superseded in 2016.

Recently, a new law, Senate Bill 277,

was signed into law on June 30, 2015 and will be effective January 1, 2016. This law will no longer permit immunization exemptions based on personal beliefs for children in child care and public/private schools. The bill exempts pupils in a home-based private school and students enrolled in an independent study program and who do not receive classroom based instruction.

Research indicates that states with stricter exemption policies have lower rates of vaccine refusal; in addition higher rates of vaccine refusals are linked to higher rates of disease and outbreaks. The only other states with similar immunization policies that do not allow any non-medical exemptions are Mississippi and West Virginia.

HIV/AIDS/STI Collaboration

With advancements in understanding HIV/AIDS treatments, and education, there is increased awareness on how to prevent new infections. World AIDS Day is the first ever global health day. December 1st, World AIDS Day, is an opportunity to unite in the fight against human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

An estimated 1.2 million people are living with HIV in the United States. Thanks to better treatments, people with HIV are now living longer—and with a better quality of life—than ever before. For those living with HIV, it is important to make choices to stay healthy and protect others. There are an estimated 50,000 new HIV diagnoses each year, making screening and prevention im-

portant challenges to overcome.

Medical providers are essential in helping prevent new HIV infections, as well as preventing HIV infections from progressing to AIDS. Medical providers should understand the interaction between HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STI) and be aware of current HIV/STI screening, prevention and treatment guidelines. Partnerships between persons with HIV and their medical providers that foster collaboration, communication, and a spirit of shared responsibility for HIV prevention and care, benefits both individuals and the community.

Medical providers should provide HIV and STI testing, prevention, and care services. They should also be diligent in reporting HIV and STI cases to the De-

partment of Public Health. Confidential Morbidity Reports (CMRs) to report a STI are available at <http://1.usa.gov/1MGy21T>. HIV infections can be reported by calling the Communicable Disease Section at (800) 722-4794. Providers may also call with any questions regarding HIV/STI reporting and treatment



4th Annual Recognition Day for Disease Intervention Specialists

For those who have wondered how the 2015 California measles outbreak was conquered; or how the latest California pertussis epidemic is being controlled; or perhaps, what the health department is doing to combat skyrocketing numbers of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The answer lies in the hard work and dedication of your local Communicable Disease Investigators (CDIs).

October 2, 2015, marked the fourth annual recognition day for Disease Intervention Specialists. In the County of San Bernardino these individuals are known as Communicable Disease Investigators (CDIs). CDIs are critical to the foundation of public health service. Originally created to work in the field of Sexually Transmitted Disease prevention, the ground-level investigative skills of these skilled professionals have become key components of communicable disease outbreak response, tuberculosis (TB) contact investigation, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) exposure notification, and other infectious disease control efforts.

The dedicated CDIs in the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health work to intervene in the spread of infection, increase access to medical

care, educate the public about disease transmission and risk, and provide recommendations and updates to medical providers and other public health partners.



Consider these facts:

CDIs investigated...

- ◆ approximately 200 cases of HIV/AIDS and >14,000 reports of STIs in 2014;
- ◆ 227 cases of pertussis (whooping cough) as part of the California-

wide 2014 epidemic;

- ◆ >600 contacts to 12 measles cases in the 2014-2015 outbreak in California; and
- ◆ >10,000 reports of other communicable diseases in 2014.

All CDIs complete extensive training, which provides a strong foundation for field investigation techniques, making their skill set essential to containing disease outbreaks such as H1N1 influenza and hepatitis. The services provided by the CDIs in the County effectively break the chain of disease transmission and protect the public's health. The work they do is a critical component of disease control.

The annual recognition day is a time to thank these individuals who are so essential in controlling the spread of disease. The collective work of the County's CDIs is a critical link between personal health and the health of the community. Helping one person helps keep our community healthy. Thank you to these dedicated individuals!

The Power is in Your Hands

Hand hygiene is critical to interrupt the spread of infectious diseases, such as the common cold, influenza, and gastrointestinal illnesses. Global Handwashing has been celebrated on October 15th worldwide each year since 2008 by school children, teachers, families, and others, and was established by the Global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing. It is a way to support a global and local culture of handwashing with soap, shine a spotlight on the state of handwashing in each country, and raise awareness about the benefits of handwashing with soap.

When should you wash your hands?

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or

wound

- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage

What is the right way to wash your hands?

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.
- Rub your hands together to make a lather and scrub them well; be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

- Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
- Rinse your hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.





Communicable Disease Section

351 N. Mountain View Ave #104
San Bernardino, CA 92415
Phone: 1(800) 722-4794
Fax: (909) 387-6377

Confidential Morbidity Reports (CMRs) can be found on our website and can be faxed to: TB, Epi, STD: (909) 387-6377
For HIV CMRs call before faxing.

To report suspect or confirmed cases of TB to the Tuberculosis Control Program, please fill out a TB case/suspect form for your hospitalized or clinic patient and fax to (909) 387-6377. Follow up with a phone call to one of our TB nurses at 1-800-722-4794.

Events and Observances

October	Recognition Day for Disease Intervention Specialists: October 2
November	Inland Empire Immunization Coalition (IEIC) General Meeting: November 19



IMMUNIZATION
TECHNIQUES
Safe • Effective • Caring

IMMUNIZATION SKILLS INSTITUTE

Immunization Skills Institute is a free innovative course that will train medical assistants on current, effective and caring immunization techniques.

For registration information contact a Health Education Specialist at:

1-800-722-4794.

Web Resources

County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health

<http://www.sbcounty.gov/dph>

California Department of Public Health

- Division of Communicable Disease Control
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/dcdc>
- Vaccine for Children (VFC)
<http://www.eziz.org>
- School Immunization Requirements
<http://www.shotsforschool.org>
- California Immunization Registry (CAIR)
<http://cairweb.org>
- STD Branch Health Information for Professionals
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/std/pages/default.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- Disease & Conditions (A - Z Index)
<http://www.cdc.gov>
- Immunization Schedules
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules>
- HIV/AIDS & STDs
<http://www.cdc.gov/std/hiv>
- STD Treatment Guidelines
<http://www.cdc.gov/std/tg2015/>

American Public Health Association

<http://www.apha.org>