

The Winnebago County Health Department Presents  
**Communicable Disease Bulletin**

Fall Edition 2012



**Public Health**  
 Prevent. Promote. Protect.



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**WCHD Mission Statement:**

To prevent disease, promote health and enlist the community in efforts to improve the health of all Winnebago County residents.

**My Stomach Hurts.....**

Norovirus is a common cause of gastroenteritis. It is often responsible for outbreaks in schools, child care centers, long term care facilities, and on cruise ships. It is spread from person to person through contaminated food or water, and by touching contaminated surfaces. Norovirus is recognized as the leading cause of foodborne related outbreaks in the United States, most often from ill food handlers who contaminate the food they prepare. Individuals infected with Norovirus may still be able to transmit the virus for at least 2 days after their symptoms have resolved.

Norovirus infections occur year round, but are more common during the winter months. The disease is sometimes referred to as “winter vomiting disease” or the “stomach flu”. However, Norovirus and Influenza are unrelated viruses that cause different illnesses. Influenza is a respiratory illness caused by an Influenza viral strain while gastrointestinal illnesses are caused by viruses or other microorganisms, but not by the Influenza virus. The table below summarizes the general differences.

	<b>Norovirus</b>	<b>Influenza (“the flu”)</b>
<b>Symptoms</b>	Sudden onset of nausea and vomiting and/or watery diarrhea with cramps. Low grade fever, chills, and body aches can occur.	Sudden onset of fever (generally greater than 100.4 F), headache, sore throat, cough, and body aches. Vomiting and diarrhea are less common.
<b>Duration of Illness</b>	Typically between 24 and 72 hours	Generally between 3 and 7 days, but can be longer.
<b>Severity of Illness</b>	Rarely causes severe complications. Dehydration is the most common complication.	Can cause severe complications, especially among young children, the elderly, and people with underlying health conditions.

**Prevention**



No vaccine available. And good hand hygiene is encouraged. Anyone with Norovirus symptoms should wait at least 48 hours after resolution of symptoms before preparing food for others.

Annual vaccine available. Anyone with Influenza symptoms should stay home until at least 24 hours after fever is absent. Good hand hygiene and cough etiquette is encouraged.

## Why Won't This Cough Go Away!

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), both Influenza and the common cold are respiratory illnesses, but caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it is often difficult to distinguish the difference without Influenza testing. In most cases, the flu is more severe than a cold. Symptoms such as fever, body aches, fatigue and cough are more common and intense when an individual has Influenza. Individuals with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose and congestion. Colds generally do not result in serious health complications such as bacterial infections, pneumonia, hospitalization, or death.

Pertussis is a contagious bacterial infection that can be passed easily from person to person. Whooping cough can be extremely serious for infants, and hundreds of babies are hospitalized annually. Pertussis is often spread to infants by teens and adults as their immunity to the infection wanes. Pertussis can cause severe health complications including pneumonia and death. The Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD) recommends that everyone be immunized against Influenza and Pertussis to protect yourself and those around you. Pertussis, Influenza, and colds are highly contagious. In the initial stages, they may seem alike. The following table compares the symptoms for each illness.

Symptom	Influenza	Colds	Pertussis
Fever	Present and high	Uncommon	Uncommon
Chills	Common	Uncommon	Uncommon
Headache	Common	Uncommon	Uncommon
Muscle Aches	Severe	Slight to Moderate	Uncommon
Weakness	Moderate	Mild	Mild
Exhaustion	Common	Uncommon	Uncommon
Runny Nose	Common	Common	Common
Sneezing	Sometimes	Common	Common
Sore Throat	Common	Common	Uncommon
Cough	Dry	Productive	Persistent
Infectious Period	1 day before symptom onset and 3-7 days after	Typically 4-7 days after symptom onset	Before cough to 21 days after cough onset

## Communicable Disease Statistics

Disease Type	2011	2012*	Disease Type	2011	2012*
Chickenpox	24	33	Hepatitis C-chronic	240	168
Cryptosporidiosis	5	5	Histoplasmosis	0	0
Ehrlichiosis	2	0	Lyme disease	23	23
Enteric e. coli	17	0	Neisseria Meningitis	4	0
Giardiasis	17	9	Pertussis (whooping cough)	35	18
Haemophilus Influenzae, inv.	2	2	Potential Human Rabies Exposure	3	2
Hepatitis A	5	4	Rubella	0	0
Hepatitis B-acute	5	4	Salmonellosis	54	42
Hepatitis B-chronic	39	18	Shigellosis	5	0
<b>*Preliminary year to date data</b>			West Nile Virus	1	0