



## Cowlitz County Health Department

1952 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Longview, WA 98632  
TEL (360) 414-5599  
FAX (360) 425-7531

### Board of County Commissioners

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George Raiter	District 2
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# THE EPIPHANY

Volume 1

Cowlitz County Health Department Communicable Disease Newsletter

Summer 2009

## RABIES PROPHYLAXIS

Summer is here, so providers may see more complaints related to animal bites and bat exposures.

### Important points to remember:

- Animal bites and initiation of Rabies Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) are reportable to your local health jurisdiction (LHJ).
- Bats are the most common reservoir for rabies in Washington.
- Rabies in cats, dogs and other mammals like skunks and raccoons is relatively rare, but not unheard of.
- The Cowlitz County Health Department is happy to consult with you on the details of the exposure and whether or not observation of the animal or rabies prophylaxis is indicated.

### Examples of when PEP is recommended:

- A person wakes up from sleeping to find a bat in the same room.
- A parent walks into a room where a child is playing and observes a bat flying around. If the child is too young to talk, contact with the bat is difficult to clarify and PEP is indicated.

All rabies post exposure treatment is reportable to the Cowlitz County Health Department. **It is the responsibility of the PCP's office to schedule and provide the immunizations of rabies immune globulin (RIG) and rabies vaccine to their patients.** The health department is available to assist providers with vaccine ordering and deciding if PEP is recommended. More information on the recommended schedule for RIG and rabies vaccine for non-immunized individuals is available through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/exposure/postexposure.html>).

### Pre-exposure vaccination should be considered for the following persons:

- Veterinarians and their staff.
- Animal handlers, rabies researchers, and laboratory workers whose activities bring them into frequent contact with rabies virus or potentially rabid animals.
- International travelers to areas where dog or other animal rabies is enzootic AND immediate access to appropriate medical care, including rabies vaccine and immune globulin, could be limited.

Pre-exposure vaccination does not eliminate the need for additional therapy after a rabies exposure but it simplifies management by eliminating the need for RIG and decreasing the number of doses of vaccine. For more information see the CDC pre-exposure guidelines: <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/exposure/preexposure.html>

## COWLITZ COUNTY REPORT CARD

The 2008 Community Report Card was released on April 22, 2009. The Report Card offers an assessment of the county that can be used as a tool for planning purposes and to measure progress towards goals for a healthier and safer community. The Cowlitz County Health Department works closely with Pathways 2020 to provide data for use in the report card. The Report Card includes six sections: Healthy Lifestyles, Economy, Education, Families, Community, and Environment. **The full report can be viewed at:** [http://www.mycowlitz.com/health/assessment/2008%20Community%20Report%20Card\\_high%20res.pdf](http://www.mycowlitz.com/health/assessment/2008%20Community%20Report%20Card_high%20res.pdf)

## SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE PROGRAM

**REPORTING:** Only 43% of Cowlitz County providers report STD cases within three working days. Reporting is fast and easy – **there is a new faxable Sexually Transmitted Disease Case Report form you can use**, located online at: <http://www.mycowlitz.com/health/STD/Cowlitz%20Case%20Report%20fax%20sheet.pdf>

**REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH COALITION:** Wednesday April 15<sup>th</sup> was the launch of the Reproductive Health Coalition. The Coalition was conceived as a way for local providers, school health staff, and other concerned parties to collaborate on identifying and solving local reproductive health challenges. At the first meeting, the group focused on several topics, including:

- Partnerships between providers and local schools.
- Local access to sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing and treatment.
- Boosting outreach to alternative settings, such as churches and juvenile detention centers.

Meetings will be held quarterly. Please join us at our next meeting at noon on October 6<sup>th</sup> at the Health Department. For more information on the RH Coalition, please contact Laura Ebinger (360) 414-5587 or Heather Morrow-Almeida (360) 501-1218 at the Health Department.

## STATISTICS AT A GLANCE:

- Gonorrhea is down 90% from last year to date (May)
- Chlamydia is down 4% from last year to date (May)

## OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED:

**Cowlitz Free Medical Clinic** is looking for MDs, RNs, CNAs, & Spanish Translators.

More information at: [http://www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/health/Free\\_Clinic/Free\\_Clinic.htm](http://www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/health/Free_Clinic/Free_Clinic.htm)

**Seattle STD/HIV Prevention Training Center:** [http://depts.washington.edu/seapctc/course\\_list.shtml](http://depts.washington.edu/seapctc/course_list.shtml)

- Ask, Screen, Intervene, Boise, ID, Aug 27, 2009
- STD Update with Optional Clinical Practicum, Portland OR, Oct 14-16, 2009

## PREGNANT WOMEN & SMOKING

In Cowlitz County, our maternal smoking rates are a shocking 28.3% compared to the overall state rate of 10.1%. If you have a patient who is pregnant and smoking, please let her know that there are resources to help her quit. You can:

- Talk with her about the health risks of smoking while pregnant for both mother and baby (premature birth, SIDS, and respiratory disease) and the long term benefits of quitting.
- Encourage her to call the **toll-free Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669)** to talk with a quit coach to develop her own plan to quit smoking. The quit line has a **tailored protocol for pregnant women**, which includes:
  - o Customized counseling and quit materials
  - o Nicotine replacement therapy upon physician approval

Fill out and fax back the Washington State Tobacco Quit Line referral form for your patient, found at:

<http://www.quitline.com/documents/HealthCareFax-backReferralForm.pdf> and a quit coach will contact her.

## NEWS FROM THE CDC

*Preliminary FoodNet Data on the Incidence of Infection with Pathogens Transmitted Commonly through Food—10 States, 2008; April 10, MMWR 58(13);333-37.*

**Reports of large foodborne illness outbreaks and general lack of progress in meeting national health targets suggest gaps in the current food safety system and the need for continued development and evaluation of food safety practices.**

As a health care provider, you can do your part:

- 1) Encourage patients to practice risk reduction strategies in their food selection and preparation (more information is available at <http://www.foodsafety.gov> and <http://www.fightbac.org>)
- 2) Ensure timely notifiable disease reporting to the Cowlitz County Health Department. **Gastrointestinal illnesses are reportable if an outbreak is suspected!**
- 3) Get involved to improve the local food environment. One option is participation in the Cowlitz County Food Safety Advisory Committee. For more information, contact the Health Department.

## THE H1N1 (SWINE) FLU RESPONSE

Region IV Public Health (Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, & Wahkiakum) provided a landmark unified response to the H1N1 virus in April and May. This regional incident management team distributed advisories for testing and treatment, case investigations, public education, and oversight of the distribution of Strategic National Stockpile antiviral medications.

Reported Cases of Selected Communicable Diseases	2009 (Jan-May)	2008 (Jan-May)
Campylobacteriosis	8	8
Chlamydia trachomatis	122	129
Cryptosporidiosis	2	4
Giardiasis	1	0
Gonorrhea	3	26
Hepatitis B, Acute	2	0
Hepatitis B, Chronic	5	2
Hepatitis C, Chronic	102	92
Herpes Simplex	17	21
HIV/AIDS*	6	2
Lead (Child lead)	0	7
Legionellosis	0	0
Lyme Disease	1	0
Pertussis	0	1
Rabies Post Exposure Prophylaxis	1	2
Salmonellosis	1	2
Syphilis	1	1

\*includes only AIDS cases that are not known progressions from HIV

## DISEASE REPORTING

### Numbers to Call

During business hours

(M, W, Th, F—8:30-12:00, 1:00-4:30 & T — 8:30-6:00)

STDs 360-414-5587

HIV/AIDS 360-414-5564

Other 360-414-5590

Non-business hours: 360-636-9595

To view the list of reportable diseases, visit:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/notify/other/providerposter.pdf>

## COWLITZ COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT WEBSITE

<http://www.mycowlitz.com/health/>

## OUR TEAM: THE EPI-LADIES

- Dr. Jennifer Vines, Deputy Health Officer
- Laura Ebinger, STD Program Coordinator
- LeAnne Gilmore, Communicable Disease Public Health Nurse
- Monica Monteon, Epidemiologist
- Heather Morrow-Almeida, CDC Public Health Prevention Fellow

**Contributing Author:** Jerusha Angel, Local Emergency Response Coordinator