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THE EPIPHANY

Cowlitz County Health Department Newsletter

Volume 7

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Note: Action items and links are in red

New Immunization Exemption Law

A recent **report** by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) demonstrated that, at 6%, Washington State had the highest rates of exemptions among our kindergarteners in the nation. The exemption rates have more than doubled in the past decade. In the 2010-2011 school year, Cowlitz County's exemption rates were 4.4%, up from 3.3% the prior school year.

Effective starting July 22, 2011 a new law in Washington will require parents seeking an immunization exemption to have a licensed health care professional sign the Certificate of Exemption (COE).

The required signature will verify that the provider gave the parent or guardian information about the benefits and risk of immunization.

Health care providers eligible to sign the Certificate of Exemption or write a letter of exemption include physicians (M.D.), physician assistants (P.A.), osteopaths (D.O.), naturopaths (N.D.), and advanced registered nurse practitioners (A.R.N.P.) who are licensed in Washington.

Other important points:

- A letter signed by the health care provider stating the same information can also be used instead of the COE
- The law only applies to exemptions requested after July 22, 2011
- A signature from a health care provider is NOT needed for parents who demonstrate membership in a church or religious group that does not allow health care providers to provide medical treatment to a child
- Information covered about immunizations is at the discretion of the health care provider

The COE is available here: [English](#) and [Español](#)

Examples of how to fill out the forms for the following situations are in the hyperlinks below:

- [A temporary medical exemption](#)
- [A permanent medical exemption](#)
- [A standard religious exemption](#)
- [A religious exemption due to membership in a church](#)
- [A personal/philosophical exemption](#)

Additional resources regarding the law and immunizations are available on the Department of Health's website:

<http://doh.wa.gov/cfh/immunize/providers/exemption-info.htm>.

Gonorrhea: Evolution Toward Resistance

A new strain of Gonorrhea resistant to cephalosporin antibiotics was discovered in Japan. Gonorrhea cephalosporin treatment failures have been reported across Asia and parts of Europe. As no other treatment for Gonorrhea has yet to be developed, the CDC urges continuing to follow current treatment. Suspicions of resistance should be cultured and reported to the CDC.

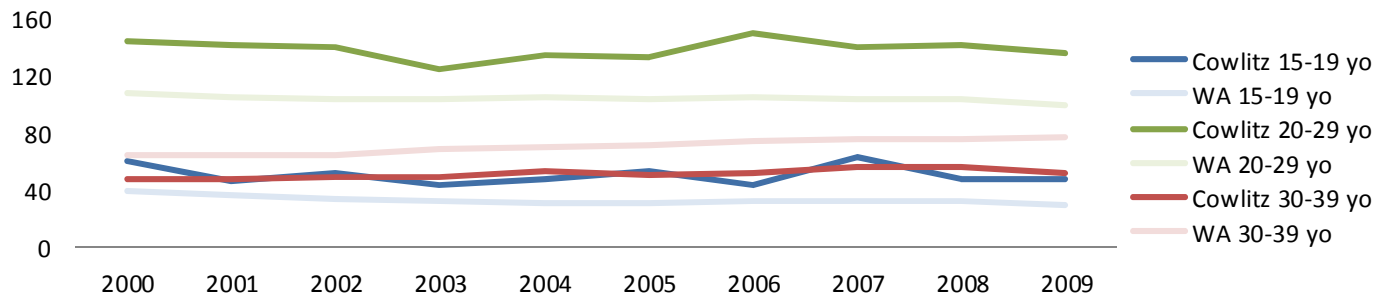
The recommended regimen for uncomplicated gonococcal infections of the cervix, urethra, and rectum is: (*Ceftriaxone* 250 mg IM in a single dose OR, IF NOT AN OPTION *Cefixime* 400 mg orally in a single dose OR Single-dose injectable *cephalosporin* regimens) **PLUS** (*Azithromycin* 1g orally in a single dose OR *Doxycycline* 100 mg a day for 7 days)¹. uncomplicated

NPR's Science Friday discussed this topic on July 15. It can be heard at: <http://www.sciencefriday.com/program/archives/201107151>

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sexually Transmitted Disease Treatment Guidelines, 2010. MMWR 2010; 59(No. RR-12), pp .50.

ASSESSMENT: BIRTH RATES AND RISK FACTORS

Birth Rates by Age Group, Cowlitz County & Washington State (as a reference point), 2000-2009



Select Birth Risk Factors by Age, 2009

Age Group	Late Prenatal Care (2nd or 3rd trimester)		Smoking		Low Birth Weight (<2500 grams)		Obese pre-pregnancy	
	Cowlitz	WA	Cowlitz	WA	Cowlitz	WA	Cowlitz	WA
15-19	25.3%	34.8%	28.5%	15.8%	5.7%	7.0%	21.4%	20.1%
20-29	23.1%	25.8%	26.4%	12.2%	8.7%	5.9%	34.5%	27.8%
30-39	15.2%	19.7%	19.2%	5.4%	5.7%	6.4%	37.9%	25.8%

Birth rates for 15-19 year olds and 30-39 year olds are similar in Cowlitz County, while the birth rates for 30-39 year olds is higher in Washington state compared to that for 15-19 year olds. Cowlitz County has lower rates of late prenatal care in all age groups than WA state; yet, rates of smoking and obesity are higher in all age groups. These rates have been provided to help guide policies and services for priority populations. If there are health data you would like to see, please contact Monica at 501-1204 or monteonm@co.cowlitz.wa.us.

Reported Cases of Selected Notifiable Diseases, 2011 & 2010 Comparisons

Notifiable Disease	YTD 2010 (Jan-Jun)	YTD 2011 (Jan-Jun)
Campylobacteriosis	10	15
Chlamydia trachomatis	169	193
Cryptosporidiosis	3	3
Gonorrhea	10	8
Hepatitis B, Acute	2	5
Hepatitis B, Chronic	5	3
Hepatitis C, Chronic	83	105
Herpes Simplex	16	17
HIV/AIDS	3	3
Lead (Child lead)	0	0
Pertussis	11	16
Rabies PEP	1	0
Salmonellosis	0	3
Syphilis	2	1
All Reported Diseases	365	372

DISEASE REPORTING

Reporting during business hours
(M-F 8:30-12:00, 1:00-4:30)

Tel: 360-414-5590

360-414-5599, ext 0 for the receptionist

Fax: 360-425-7531 (confidential fax line for 3 day or 30 day reportable conditions)

Reporting during non-business hours: 360-636-9595

Review the complete list of notifiable conditions at:

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

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

INFORMATION ON REPORTABLE DISEASES:

http://www.mycowlitz.com/health/assessment/notifiable_conditions_form.htm

OUR TEAM: THE EPI-LADIES

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