

The Pump Handle



"I had an interview with the Board of Guardians of St. James's parish, on the evening of Thursday, 7th September, and represented the above circumstances to them. In consequence of what I said, the handle of the pump was removed on the following day."

John Snow, 1855

March 2010 Topics

- Rabid Dog at a North Dakota Animal Shelter
- May Is Hepatitis Awareness Month
- National Infant Immunization Week Is April 24 – May 1, 2010
- Acute Viral Gastroenteritis Activity Update
- HIV/STD/TB/Hepatitis Symposium May 2010

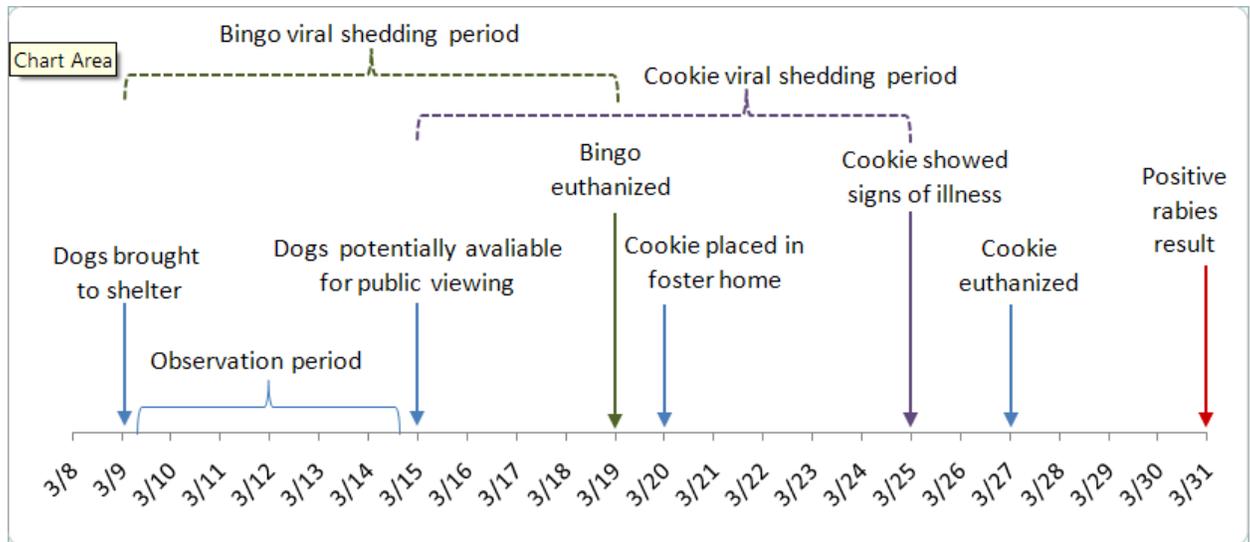


Rabid Dog at a North Dakota Animal Shelter

On March 9, 2010, two dogs were brought to the Circle of Friends Humane Society in Grand Forks. The dogs had been picked up as strays in Marshall County, Minnesota. Upon arrival, the dogs remained in observation through March 14. Both dogs were potentially available for public viewing at the humane shelter on March 15.

The larger of the two dogs, Bingo, was considered not to be suitable for adoption and was euthanized on March 19. Bingo did not exhibit signs of illness or behavioral changes that would indicate rabies infection at the time he was euthanized and was not tested for rabies.

On March 20, the smaller dog, Cookie, was placed with a foster family. The foster family reported that Cookie started acting sick on March 25. The dog presented to a local veterinarian on March 27 with neurological symptoms and was euthanized and sent for rabies testing. On March 31, the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) was notified that Cookie tested positive for rabies. Due to the nature of the two dog's relationship, the possibility exists that Bingo and Cookie were exposed to rabies during the same incident. Therefore, viral shedding in Bingo could not be ruled out, and Bingo was considered rabid as well.



Shelter employees and volunteers were contacted by the Grand Forks Public Health Department and assessed for exposure to either of the two dogs at the Circle of Friends Humane Society. A news release was issued to notify the public who may have been exposed to the two dogs at the shelter to contact the NDDoH or the Grand Forks Public Health Department for consultation. Those with possible exposures were referred to a health-care provider for evaluation of the need to initiate rabies post-exposure prophylaxis.

For more information about rabies, visit www.ndhealth.gov/disease/Rabies/.



May Is Hepatitis Awareness Month

May is hepatitis awareness month. One in 12 people worldwide are infected with either hepatitis B virus or hepatitis C virus. Because most of the 500 million infected with hepatitis B or hepatitis C are asymptomatic and are unaware of their infection, they may spread the virus to others without knowing. Viral hepatitis is the leading cause of liver cancer and the most common reason for liver transplantation in the United States.

The most common types of viral hepatitis in the United States are hepatitis A, B and C. These three viruses are very different, but all cause liver disease. Hepatitis A is an infection lasting no more than six months, while hepatitis B and C can develop into lifelong chronic illness.

Hepatitis A is a virus that is spread by the fecal-oral route. A person becomes infected with the virus by ingesting fecal matter from contaminated objects, food or drinks. People at greater risk of hepatitis A infections include those traveling to countries where hepatitis A is common, having sexual contact with someone who has hepatitis A, or living in the same household as a person infected with hepatitis A.

Hepatitis B is a virus that is spread from person to person through infected blood or sexual secretions. Those at increased risk for infection include anyone who has sex with

an infected individual and those who share needles, syringes or other drug injection equipment. Hepatitis B also can be passed from an infected mother to her baby at birth.

Hepatitis C is spread from person to person through infected blood. Those at increased risk for hepatitis C infections include those who share needles or other equipment to inject drugs, who received a blood donation before 1992, or who has received tattoos or piercings in unsterile environments.

Eleven public health units across North Dakota offer free-of-charge hepatitis C screening and hepatitis A and B vaccinations to those at risk. These sites include:

- Bismarck Buleigh Public Health.
- Custer Health.
- Central Valley Health District.
- Fargo Cass Public Health.
- First District Health Unit.
- Grand Forks Public Health Department.
- Lake Region District Health Unit.
- MinneTohe Health Center.
- Richland County Health Department.
- Southwestern District Health Unit.
- Upper Missouri District Health Unit.

Throughout hepatitis awareness month, the NDDoH is encouraging individuals to **Get Tested!** If you are at risk for hepatitis, knowing your status can help save your life. There are treatment options available for hepatitis, but keeping your liver healthy is very important. Avoiding alcohol and drug consumption, eating a healthy diet, and exercising are all ways a person can promote a healthy liver.

For information on hepatitis, please contact the NDDoH hepatitis program at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378 or visit our website at www.ndhealth.gov/disease/hepatitis.



National Infant Immunization Week Is April 24 – May 1, 2010

National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is April 24 through May 1, 2010. About one in five children ages 19 to 35 months in North Dakota are not up-to-date for recommended vaccines. The rates for the fourth dose of the diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTaP) vaccine, routinely given when a child is between the ages of 12 and 18 months, lags behind other vaccination rates in North Dakota. Many parents believe their children are up-to-date, when in fact that may not be true. During this week, the North Dakota Department of Health urges parents of children 12 through 18 months of age to check their immunization records to ensure their child has had this important dose. If the child is missing this immunization or others, the parent should contact the child's health-care provider or local public health unit.

Each year more than 8,500 children are born in North Dakota, and each are in need of protection from diseases that can be prevented through immunization. Infants and young

children are particularly vulnerable to many serious illnesses and diseases. Immunizations are the best way for parents to protect the health of their children for a lifetime. Disease-causing viruses and bacteria still are circulating and, we still have cases of vaccine-preventable diseases. Hospitalizations and complications of pertussis are most common among infants 6 months and younger.

NIIW is an annual observance that emphasizes the need to fully immunize children 24 months and younger against 14 vaccine-preventable diseases. For more information about NIIW or where to get immunizations for your children, contact Abbi Pierce, North Dakota Department of Health, at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378, or visit our website at www.ndhealth.gov/immunize.



Acute Viral Gastroenteritis Activity Update

Since Dec. 1, 2009, six viral gastroenteritis outbreaks (with three confirmed as norovirus outbreaks) have been reported to the NDDoH by long-term-care facilities. Additionally, five community events have resulted in acute gastroenteritis symptoms, and four have been confirmed as norovirus outbreaks. A total of 11 viral gastroenteritis outbreaks, seven confirmed norovirus, have occurred in Cass, Grand Forks, Mountrail, Pierce, Ransom, Renville, Walsh, Ward and Williams counties.

Outbreaks of gastroenteritis most often occur in the winter and early spring. Norovirus is the most common cause of viral gastroenteritis outbreaks and is often called the “winter vomiting disease” or “stomach flu.” Although it is commonly referred to as the stomach flu, it has no relationship to the influenza virus that causes respiratory infections. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates noroviruses cause 23 million cases of acute gastroenteritis each year and about 50 percent of all foodborne outbreaks.

Practice good hand hygiene, disinfect contaminated surfaces and do not return to work or school until 24 to 72 hours after symptoms resolve are recommended measures for the prevention and control of norovirus infections. Please visit www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5633a2.htm for more information about the prevention of norovirus.

To report an acute viral gastroenteritis outbreak, please contact the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378 or submit an online report form at www.ndhealth.gov/disease/GI/.



HIV/STD/TB/Hepatitis Symposium May 2010

The 2010 HIV/STD/TB/Hepatitis Symposium will be held May 19 and 20, 2010, at the Radisson Inn, 201 North Fifth Street, Fargo, N.D.

The symposium will include both plenary and breakout sessions, and the following topics will be presented:

- HIV/STDs/TB/Viral hepatitis in North Dakota
- HIV/STDs and alcohol
- Occupational exposure and hepatitis testimonial
- Culturally sensitive counseling

- HIV/HCV nutrition
- STD screening and sexual history taking
- Pediatric TB
- Hepatitis protocol at the state penitentiary
- HPV male screening process
- HCV counseling and testing

The audience for the symposium includes all health-care and substance-abuse professionals who provide services to individuals with HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis or viral hepatitis. The symposium will provide an opportunity to receive education and resources to improve the capacity to provide these services. Continuing education credits are being requested from the North Dakota Board of Nursing, North Dakota Board of Addiction Counseling Examiners and the North Dakota Board of Social Workers. Additional information about continuing education credits will be posted to the website as it becomes available.

The registration form is available on the NDDoH website at www.ndhealth.gov/disease/hepatitis/. The registration deadline has been extended to **April 23, 2010**. Additional information about the symposium will be posted on the website as it becomes available. For more information about the symposium, please contact Julie Wagendorf or Krissie Guerard, at 701.328.2378 or 800.472.2180.

Contributing authors of The Pump Handle include Abbi Pierce, Michelle Feist, Julie Wagendorf, Kirby Kruger, Tracy Miller and Sarah Weninger. For questions, suggestions or inquiries, or to be removed from the mailing list, please contact Sarah Weninger of the Division of Disease Control at 701.328.2366 or by email at sweninger@nd.gov.

The pump handle picture in the title was obtained from the website www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow.html.



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