



Grant County Health District – Always Working for a Safer and Healthier Grant County

Ephrata Office County Courthouse
PO Box 37, Ephrata, WA 98823
509-754-6060

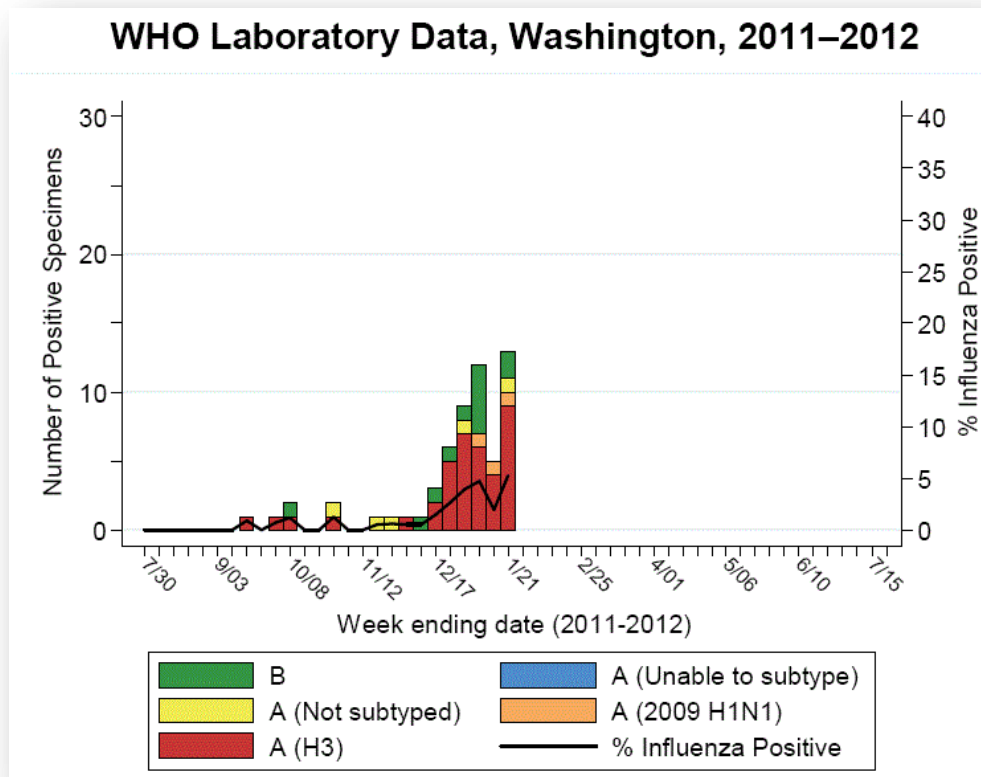
Moses Lake Office
1038 West Ivy Suite 1, Moses Lake, WA 98837
509-766-7960

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 02/01/2012 TO: Healthcare Community Long Term Care Facilities	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT Shawta Sackett RN, MPH Community Public Health Manager, Epidemiologist 509-766-7960 x 21 Lois Swenson, RN PHN Communicable Diseases Nurse 509-766-7960 x 13 24 hour phone: (509) 398-2083
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Influenza Season and Norovirus Update

Summary 2011-2012 Influenza Season

- Influenza activity has remained low throughout the season in Washington. The proportion of **outpatient and emergency room visits** for influenza-like illness (ILI) remains **low in Washington**.
- **One laboratory-confirmed** influenza death has been reported in Washington.
- **As of January 26th, three positive influenza cases reported throughout Grant County.**



Map source: Washington State Department of Health Weekly Flu Update

February historically the peak month for influenza:

- Over the past 35 years, February has been the month with the greatest number of people sick with flu (46% of the time), followed by January (20%), March and December (both 11%). Please, remind your patients it's not too late to protect themselves and family by getting a flu shot now.

Report the following to GCHD by calling 509-766-7960 or the after-hours phone 509-762-1160:

- **Within 3 days** - Laboratory-confirmed influenza deaths in persons of all ages.
[Adult Death Reporting Form](#) [Pediatric Death Reporting Form](#)
Immediately - Suspected and laboratory-confirmed novel influenza viruses, such as avian influenza A (H5N1). (Please note, 2009 H1N1 virus is no longer a novel virus.)
Immediately - Outbreaks of influenza-like illness or laboratory-confirmed influenza in an institutional setting. (e.g., long term care facilities)
Immediately - Unexplained critical illness or death in people < 50 years-old.
- **The Grant County Health District would like to assist long term-care facilities with ILI outbreaks, or, increasing number of patients with ILI. Please contact Lois Swenson, GCHD CD Nurse 509-766-7960 ext. 13 or lsvenson@granthealth.org.**

Influenza Resources:

- WA DOH Influenza web page - www.doh.wa.gov/notify/nc/influenza.htm
- Comprehensive information regarding the prevention and control of influenza with vaccines- www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination
- Diagnostic testing, antiviral medication, and infection control – www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals
- ACIP 2011 Recommendations - www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6033a3.htm?s_cid=mm6033a3_w

Flu Activity:

- Washington State: www.doh.wa.gov/ehsphl/epidemiology/cd/fluupdate.pdf
- National: www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly

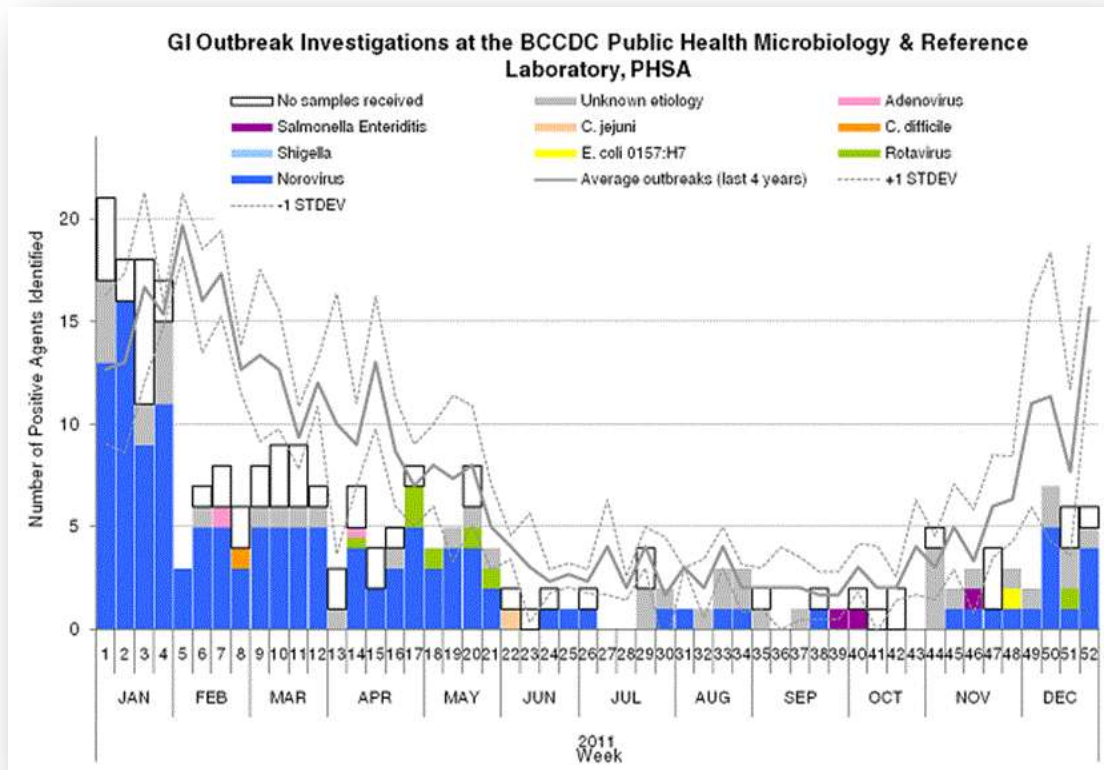
Swine Influenza and Human Influenza Viruses:

- The Grant County Health District recently sent an alert to swine producers regarding the risks associated with human and swine type influenza viruses. Healthcare providers should ask ill patients about their exposure to swine when being seen for flu-like illnesses (ILI). See alert for recommendations and precautions for people who are ill and have exposure to swine.

Swine Producers Public Health Alert:

www.granthealth.org/content/PH/swineflu_produceralert_1_23_12.pdf

January Peak Month for Norovirus



Map source: British Columbia Centre for Disease Control

- As shown in the graph above, January has historically been the peak month for norovirus in the neighboring region of Canada.
- Norovirus has recently been reported in facilities throughout Grant County. Please be alert for unexplained symptoms of norovirus including nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramping, diarrhea, fever, and headache.
- During this time of year, when transferring a vulnerable patient from a hospital to an assisted living facility, inquire about norovirus like illnesses at the facility before transport.
- **Please report any gastroenteritis outbreaks in facilities to Lois Swenson, GCHD CD Nurse 509-766-7960 ext. 13 or lswenson@granthealth.org. The Grant County Health District is available to assist with the control of such outbreaks as well as to answer your questions.**
- CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) Norovirus in Healthcare Facilities Fact Sheet: www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/norovirus/229110-ANoroCaseFactSheet508.pdf.

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