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Public Health Update

January 24, 2013

In this update:

[Flu](#)

[Lyme disease data](#)

[American Heart Month](#)

[Pertussis \(whooping cough\)](#)

[Reports and updates](#)

[Follow us](#)

Flu

Maine CDC reported widespread flu activity for the week ending Jan. 19. Weekly updates are available online:

- for Maine: <http://go.usa.gov/NoK>
- for the US: <http://go.usa.gov/ITB>
- for the world: <http://go.usa.gov/ITK>

US CDC issued a health alert on Jan. 15 summarizing its recommendations for antiviral treatment of influenza. For more information, see the Jan. 15 health alert from US CDC at <http://go.usa.gov/4Z4h>

Maine CDC staff members are participating in regular conference calls related to flu. Questions and answers from these calls are being posted on the Maine CDC website as they are available at www.mainepublichealth.gov under "Maine Public Health Updates." Notes from the Jan. 15 call are available at <http://go.usa.gov/4ZrC>

Maine CDC issued a health alert Jan. 17 with an update on flu in the state, including treatment, testing, management, and vaccine ordering information. There are some shortages of the pediatric suspension of Tamiflu®. FDA's website has instructions for mixing the suspension using 75 mg capsules at: <http://go.usa.gov/4Z9R> Facilities experiencing a Tamiflu shortage should report this to the Northern New England Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222. For more information, see Maine CDC's Jan. 17 health alert at: <http://go.usa.gov/4ZC4>

Maine CDC encourages people to take everyday measures to prevent the flu:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, but especially after coughing and sneezing. Alcohol-based hand gels can also be used.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes. Germs can spread this way.
- Get vaccinated against the flu. This year's flu vaccine appears to be a good match to the circulating strains, and it is not too late to get vaccinated. Flu vaccine is still available through health care providers and local pharmacies. To find locations where vaccine is available, call 211 or visit www.211maine.org or search by zip code and vaccine type at www.flu.gov
- Consult your health care provider about getting a pneumococcal vaccine for anyone who is younger than 5, between ages 5 and 64 with high risk conditions, or age 65 and older.
- Avoid contact with sick people. If you are at very high risk for complications, **you may want to avoid large crowds.**

If you have the flu:

- Stay home if you are sick, until you are fever-free for a full 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medicine.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow or into a tissue. Throw the tissue away.
- Although most people can stay home to recover without seeing a health care provider, **it is possible for healthy people to develop severe illness from the flu. Anyone with the flu should seek medical attention for:**
 - Dehydration
 - Trouble breathing
 - Getting better, then suddenly getting a lot worse
 - Any major change in condition

Lyme disease data

The Maine Tracking Network now includes Lyme disease data.

As the third most commonly reported infectious disease in Maine, Lyme disease poses a significant health risk to people in all parts of Maine. The availability of Lyme disease data on the Maine Tracking Network will raise awareness of the disease and help promote primary prevention of the disease and recognition of the signs of early-stage Lyme disease.

The Maine Tracking Network is a web-based data portal that lets users explore some of Maine's public health data and create customized reports, by geographic area, time period, age group, etc., using analysis and visualization tools.

Maine Tracking Network now has data for 10 public health topics, including asthma, childhood lead poisoning, heart attack, carbon monoxide poisoning, and birth outcomes. Lyme disease data were made available on the network after many months of work and collaboration between members of Maine CDC's Divisions of Environmental Health, Public Health Systems, and Infectious Disease.

These data can be accessed at:

<http://go.usa.gov/4Zqw> For direct access to the Maine Tracking Network:
<https://tracking.publichealth.maine.gov>

American Heart Month

February is American Heart Month. Most of us know someone who has had a heart attack or stroke. In Maine, more than 1 of every 4 deaths is from heart disease or stroke.

You can help protect yourself and your loved ones from heart disease and stroke by understanding the risks and taking these steps

- Know your **ABCS**
 - Ask your doctor if you should take an **A**spirin every day
 - Find out if you have high **B**lood pressure or **C**holesterol, if you do, work with your doctor to treat it
 - If you **S**moke, get help to quit ~ Maine Tobacco Helpline 1-800-207-1230
- Be physically active at least 30 minutes on most days
- Eat more fruits, vegetables and other foods low in sodium and transfat
- Take medicine as prescribed by your doctor

What else can you do?

Heart Month is a great time to learn about the [Million Hearts Campaign](#).

Million Hearts is a national campaign with the goal of preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes over five years.

February 1st is [National Wear Red Day](#). This is a day the American Heart Association encourages you to wear red and help raise awareness that heart disease is the top killer of American women.

For more about heart disease and stroke visit <http://www.mainehearthealth.org/>

Pertussis (whooping cough)

Reported cases of pertussis appear to be on a downward trend, but cases do continue to be reported.

DTaP vaccine is recommended for all infants and children. Tdap vaccine is recommended for all preteens, teens, and adults.

Maine CDC encourages health care providers to continue to follow guidelines from the July 31 health alert available at: <http://go.usa.gov/Gob>.

For guidance and information, visit <http://go.usa.gov/dCO>

Reports and updates

- The Maine Animal Rabies 4th Quarter Update for calendar year 2012 is now available at <http://go.usa.gov/4ZY3>
- Maine CDC is posting biweekly updates on gonorrhea. The Jan. 17 update is available at <http://go.usa.gov/4ZYT>
- As temperatures drop around Maine, be aware of information and resources to stay safe and warm in winter weather: <http://go.usa.gov/4ZTW>

Follow us

Follow Maine CDC's Social Media Updates:

- Facebook (www.facebook.com/MaineCDC)
- Twitter (<http://twitter.com/MEPublicHealth>)
- Blog (<http://mainepublichealth.blogspot.com>)

You may subscribe to these updates for free through an RSS feed at <http://go.usa.gov/G6u>. In Internet Explorer and Firefox, you will be prompted to Subscribe to the Feed and then select the folder where feeds are stored.

For clinical consultation and outbreak management guidance, call Maine CDC's toll-free 24-hour phone line:
1-800-821-5821

For questions and potential exposure to poison, call the Poison Center's 24-hour phone line: 1-800-222-1222