



Disease Dispatch

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Did you know?

- Food safety tips can be found at: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/food_safety_education/index.asp



- Despite a March 2008 announcement that the Virginia Department of Health will require a second dose of Mumps and Varicella vaccination for school and daycare attendance, the requirement will not take effect this year.

- You can read the Disease Dispatch and other Arlington health updates online at: <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/HumanServices/HumanServicesMain.aspx>

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Food Safety Season by Joe Gossman

Summer is here. It must be barbeque season again, and a good time to remind patients of the importance of food safety.

1. The first rule of food safety: Wash your hands, thoroughly and often before handling foods and before eating.
2. Get the grill hot before you bring the meats out of the fridge or the cooler.
3. Keep raw meats separated from foods that are ready to eat.
4. If you marinate the raw meat, don't pour any of the left-over marinade on cooked meat because it could contain harmful bacteria.
5. When you remove the grilled meat, do not place on the same plate as the raw meat. The juice from the raw meat will contaminate what just came off the grill.

6. It is very important to cook meats to the right temperature. Cook burgers to 155°F, chicken breasts to 165°F, and fish to 145°F. Insert a thermometer (check your local grocery store for a meat thermometer) in the thicker section of the meat to see if it has cooked to the right temperature.
7. Generally, cooked foods and foods that should be kept cold can sit out for two hours unrefrigerated, but on a picnic table in the hot sun that time should be cut in half.

For more information on food safety, please contact Environmental Health program at (703) 228-7400.

West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease are of Concern in Summer by Aftab Hussain, PhD

The Virginia Department of Health reports that Arlington County had 33 confirmed cases of Lyme Disease from July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008. In that same timeframe, we also had 1 confirmed case of West Nile Virus meningoencephalitis.

You can help protect your patients against both Lyme Disease and West Nile Virus exposure by reminding them of these simple measures:

- Apply insect repellent containing DEET to exposed skin. The percentage of DEET should be no more than 50% for adults, and less than 30% for children. Always follow the directions on product labels.
- Wear long pants, long sleeves, and long socks to keep ticks and mosquitoes off your skin. Light-colored clothing also makes it easier to spot ticks.
- Avoid grassy and wooded areas,

particularly in May, June and July, when ticks that transmit Lyme Disease are most active.

- Do not go outside at dawn or dusk when mosquito activity is the highest.
- Eliminate common mosquito breeding sources by draining standing water from pet food and water dishes, birdbaths, rain gutters, flat roofs, and tarps. Discard old tires and other containers that could collect water.
- Conduct frequent tick checks after all outdoor activities, especially in warm, dark areas such as the armpit or groin. Also pay special attention to the scalp.

Enclosed is a brochure on West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease for your reference. If you would like to receive additional copies for your waiting room, please call the Public Health Division at (703) 228-7400.

Did you know?

New hours and location for Family Planning/STI Services:(by appointment only)
 Mondays 12-3pm at 3033 Wilson Blvd.
 Thursdays, 3-6pm, 800 S. Walter Reed Drive
 Call (703) 228-1200 for an appointment

HIV Testing: (walk-in)
 Tuesdays, 3-6pm at 800 S. Walter Reed Drive
 Thursdays, 10-1pm at 3033 Wilson Blvd.



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Comments? Questions? What would you like to see in future issues? Contact Martha Andom, Disease Dispatch Editor at mandom@arlingtonva.us



Laboratory Diagnosis of Syphilis

by Lilibeth Grandas, RN, MSN, and Mirtha Olivera

Arlington County has seen a 206% increase in the rate of total early syphilis (TES) cases from 2002 to 2007.

YEAR	TES #/Rate
2002	11/5.8
2007	36/17.8

Early diagnosis and treatment of cases and their partners is the best strategy to control and prevent further spread of this disease.

As you know, rapid plasma reagin (RPR) is the most commonly ordered test if syphilis is suspected. However, a reactive RPR *must* be confirmed by further testing. A barrier to the early diagnosis and treatment of early syphilis is the need for the client to return to the provider for confirmatory testing.

You can reduce this barrier to the early diagnosis and treatment of syphilis by ordering the confirmatory test at the same time you order the RPR.

The codes for the two laboratories most commonly used by providers in our county are below.

Quest Diagnostics:
 RPR (Monitor) with Reflex to Titer [799X]
 Code: 79989
 CPT code: 86592

Lab Corps:
 Rapid Plasma Reagin (RPR) Test with Reflex to Quantitative RPR and Confirmatory TP-PA
 Number: 012005
 CPT code: 86592

If you use another laboratory, we recommend that you contact them regarding how to order an RPR with reflex to confirmatory testing.

Arlington Quarterly Disease Report

Event	Q2 2008 (April-June)	Q2 2007 (April-June)
Chlamydia	129	103
Gonorrhea	10	15
Early Syphilis	1	5
HIV	10	12
Campylobacteriosis	9	7
Giardiasis	4	5
Hepatitis A	1	3
Hepatitis B	6	2
Hepatitis C	8	33
Influenza	4	0
Lyme Disease	8	8
Rabies, post-exposure	11	1
Salmonellosis	6	7
Shigellosis	1	4
Varicella	3	7
Tuberculosis	7	8

** Quarters reflect calendar year