

ELABORATIONS

News and Issues for Washington's Clinical Laboratories

Volume XIV Issue 3

May/June 2009

Swine Flu (H1N1) Update

There are 236 confirmed cases of H1N1 virus in Washington as of May 13, 2009. A Snohomish County man in his 30s with underlying heart conditions died last week with what appears to be complications of swine-origin influenza (H1N1). The 236 confirmed cases are from the following counties: 162 King; 48 Snohomish; 10 Pierce; 4 Clark; 3 Whatcom; 3 Spokane; 2 Yakima; 1 Skagit; 1 Thurston; 1 Lewis; and 1 county unknown.

What is Swine Flu? In general, swine flu is a respiratory disease in pigs caused by a type A influenza virus. Viruses that cause swine flu do not normally infect humans, although rare human infections have occurred. The swine flu virus we are now concerned with originally came from pigs, but combined with other types of viruses to make a new virus that can now be transmitted from person to person. The swine influenza A type that we are now seeing is the H1N1 virus.

Although this new virus is called swine flu, it is not transmitted from eating pork products. Like other respiratory diseases, it is spread from person to person through coughs and sneezes. When people cough or sneeze, they spread germs through the air or onto surfaces that other people may touch.

Symptoms: Human symptoms for this new type of swine flu are similar to the symptoms of the regular "seasonal" influenza that happens each year. Symptoms include fever, cough, and sore throat. In addition, fatigue, lack of appetite, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea have been reported.

Precautions: Infection occurs when the virus gets into

someone's airway and lungs. As with any infectious disease spread through the human respiratory system, health officials recommend the following precautions:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, stay home and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

These are the same precautions that should be taken to stop transmitting all influenza viruses and other viruses that are transmitted from the respiratory tract.

Swine Flu Information and the Clinical Laboratory:

The Department of Health (DOH) Washington State Public Health Laboratories (PHL) staff are working diligently

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Practice Guidelines

The following practice guidelines have been developed by the Clinical Laboratory Advisory Council. They can be accessed at the following website:
www.doh.wa.gov/lqa.htm

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Anemia | PAP Smear |
| ANA | PAP Smear Referral |
| Bioterrorism Event Mgmt | Point-of-Care Testing |
| Bleeding Disorders | PSA |
| Chlamydia | Rash Illness |
| Diabetes | Red Cell Transfusion |
| Group A Strep Pharyngitis | Renal Disease |
| Group B Streptococcus | STD |
| Hepatitis | Thyroid |
| HIV | Tuberculosis |
| Infectious Diarrhea | Urinalysis |
| Intestinal Parasites | Wellness |
| Lipid Screening | |

Courses In Parasitology and Enteric Bacteriology

Parasitology Course Content:

Participants will receive information designed to assist them in the identification of intestinal and blood parasites through a series of lectures and slides. Ample time will be given to test their skills in the hands-on microscopic identification of intestinal and blood parasites.

Part II: The Protozoans - June 10 and 11, 2009

Participants will gain confidence in the identification of intestinal parasites from the phylum Protozoa upon completion of this two-day wet laboratory course. The laboratory sessions will focus on parasite concentrates only.

Part III: Reading Trichromes - July 7 and 8, 2009

Participants will gain confidence in the protozoan identification by trichrome slide examination upon completion of this two-day wet laboratory course.

Part IV: Blood Parasites - September 23 and 24, 2009

Participants will receive information designed to assist them in the identification of the different species of blood parasites. Malaria identification is the primary focus for the class. Identification of other less prevalent, medically important blood parasites such as Babesia, Leishmania, microfilaria, and Trypanisoma will be covered as well.

Enteric Bacteriology Course Content:

This course provides the participant with a review and update of the more common pathogenic enteric bacteria that cause diarrheal disease. Upon completion, the participant will have an understanding of the clinical significance of Campylobacter, Salmonella, Shigella, Vibrio, Yersinia, and several strains of *E. coli* including *E. coli* O157:H7. The major focus of this class is on the isolation and identification techniques associated with these organisms. Additional topics include laboratory safety, shipping the specimens and new methodology.

Prerequisite: Students should have taken one or more college level microbiology courses.

PHL General Course Information:

Tuition: See the registration form on page 3.

Continuing Education Units: Students receive 0.6 CEUs for completion of the Enteric Bacteriology course. Students receive 1.4 CEUs for completion of each part in the Parasitology Course series. Applicants must attend the entire workshop to receive CEUs.

Course Location: The course is located at the Washington State Public Health Laboratories in Shoreline, Washington.

Class Time: Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. on the first day of the course and the first session begins at 8:15 a.m. More information can be obtained by contacting the Training Program Assistant: phone: 206-418-5402; fax : 206-418-5445; email: phl.training@doh.wa.gov. A registration form is also available on our website and at the bottom of page 3.

Course Instructors:

Laura Kentala has over 20 years' experience in both clinical and environmental microbiology. She has worked in both public health and private laboratories. Laura has a BA Degree in Zoology with a minor in microbiology from the University of Washington. Laura has many years' experience in teaching classes at the WSPHL in clinical parasitology and water bacteriology. Laboratory personnel from around the United States have attended her classes. She has authored and co-authored articles in several areas of microbiology.

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NOTE: Letters to the editor may be published unless specified otherwise by the author.

Website addresses:

DOH home page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov>
LQA home page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/lqa.htm>
PHL home page:
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/PHL/default.htm>

Swine Flu (H1N1) Update, continued from page 1

to provide the testing that you have been requesting. Over the past few weeks, we have distributed information specific for laboratories via e-mail alerts. Since information is changing regularly, the best and most current information is found on the PHL website. Resources found at the PHL website (<http://www.doh.wa.gov/phl>) include:

- Testing Algorithm for Swine Influenza
- Laboratory / Epidemiology Resources that include guidance documents for:
 - Communicable Disease Epidemiology Laboratory:
 - H1N1 Flu Frequently Asked Questions
 - Virology Specimen Submission Form
 - CDC H1N1 Influenza Virus Biosafety Guidelines for Laboratory Workers
 - Fact Sheet for Patients: Understanding Swine Influenza Kit Test Results
 - Health care system (for health care providers, including EMS)
- DOH Swine Flu Information

The information on these links is updated regularly and is the most current source of information you need to know.

Parasitology and Enteric Bacteriology Courses cont'd

Basic Parasitology/ Enteric Bacteriology Training Courses Registration Form

Name: _____

Employer: _____

Employer Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Work Phone: _____ FAX: _____

E-mail: _____ Message Phone: _____

Class preference (check as many as applicable):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enteric Bacteriology, June 25, 2009 \$135 before 05/18/09 & \$145 after 05/18/09 | <input type="checkbox"/> Part II: Protozoans, June 10 and 11, 2009 \$250 before 06/03/09 & \$270 after 06/03/09 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part III: Trichomes, July 7 and 8, 2009 \$250 before 07/01/09 & \$270 after 07/01/09 | <input type="checkbox"/> Part IV: Blood Parasites, September 23 and 24, 2009 \$250 before 09/16/09 & \$270 after 09/16/09 |

Complete the registration form and mail to the Department of Health, PHL Training Program, 1610 NE 150th Street * PO Box 550501*Shoreline, WA 98155-9701; fax to: (206) 418-5445; e-mail to: phl.training@doh.wa.gov. A registration form is also available on our website at: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehsphl/phl/training/train.htm>. A confirmation packet containing payment instructions and a map to the course location will be mailed to you. Please do not send money with your registration form.

MTS License Renewal

**Current MTS licenses expire on
June 30, 2009.**

Final fee notices were mailed on
May 15, 2009.

Licenses will be mailed to your facility
mailing address upon fee payment.

Non-payment of your MTS license re-
newal fee by June 30, 2009 will result in
closure of the license and termination of
the CLIA number on July 1, 2009.

Call our office at (206) 418-5600
if you have questions.

Calendar of Events

PHL Training Classes:

(<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehsphil/phl/training/train.htm>)

Basic Course in Parasitology Part II (2-Day Class)

June 10-11 Shoreline

Enteric Bacteriology

June 25 Shoreline

CLMA Summer Symposium

July 13-14 Seattle

Northwest Medical Laboratory Symposium

October 21-24 Seattle

16th Annual Clinical Laboratory Conference

November 9 Seattle

2010 ASCLS-WA Spring Meeting

April 2010 Seattle

Contact information for the events listed above can be found on page 2. The Calendar of Events is a list of upcoming conferences, deadlines, and other dates of interest to the clinical laboratory community. If you have events that you would like to have included, please mail them to ELABORATIONS at the address on page 2. Information must be received at least one month before the scheduled event. The editor reserves the right to make final decisions on inclusion.

For persons with disabilities, this document is available upon request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TTY/TDD 1-800-833-6388).



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