



COCA Update

Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA)
CDC Emergency Communication System

December 17, 2012

COCA Updates are disseminated biweekly. More frequent distributions occur when there is emergency information or CDC event-specific updates to share. The next COCA Update is scheduled for **December 31**.

This issue contains information from **December 3 – December 17, 2012** and guidance documents relevant to current public health events. For questions about these or other clinical issues, please write to us at coca@cdc.gov.

Additional Resources

[CDC Emergency on Twitter](#)

[CDC Health Partners Outreach on Facebook](#)

[COCA Home Page](#)

Topics and Highlights

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[Food, Drug & Device Safety](#) *Heparin: Drug Safety Communication*

COCA News and Announcements

December's CDC Learning Connection Spotlights COCA Resources – December 3 (CDC)

CDC Learning Connection is a one-stop learning resource that can help increase public health knowledge and skills and meet professional development needs. This month COCA is featured in the CDC Learning Connection Spotlight.

<http://www.cdc.gov/learning>

Recent COCA Call/Webinar:

Multistate Outbreak Fungal Meningitis and Other Infections: Updated Clinical Guidance

Date: Tuesday, November 27, 2012

During this COCA Call, CDC subject matter experts provided updated information on epidural abscess and other clinical syndromes being diagnosed in exposed patients and reviewed CDC's diagnostic and treatment recommendations for clinicians. For more information on this call:

http://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/calls/2012/callinfo_112712.asp

Archived COCA Conference Calls are available at: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/callinfo.asp>

Free continuing education (CME, CNE, ACPE, CEU, CECH, and AAVSB/RACE) is available for most calls.

CDC News and Announcements

CDC Works For You 24/7 Blog: Quick and Affordable Test is Saving Lives in Areas Still Ravaged by "Black Death" – December 7 (CDC)

CDC scientists are developing better ways of detecting the world's most deadly diseases. In this guest blog post, Dr. Paul Mead, a medical epidemiologist with the Division of Vector-Borne Diseases at CDC, explains how he and a team of scientists are using a quick and affordable handheld test to detect plague in patients in a matter of minutes – critical for such a rapidly fatal disease.

<http://blogs.cdc.gov/cdcworksforyou24-7/2012/12/quick-and-affordable-test-is-saving-lives-in-areas-still-ravaged-by-black-death/>

CDC Science Clips: Volume 4, Issues: 49 – (CDC)

Each week select science clips are shared with the public health community to enhance awareness of emerging scientific knowledge. The focus is applied public health research and prevention science that has the capacity to improve health now.

<http://www.cdc.gov/phlic/sciclips/issues/>

Public Health Preparedness

Public Health Matters Blog - Project Wildfire: A Community Approach to Surviving Wildfires – December 3 (CDC)

CDC's Office of Public Health Preparedness and Responses' (OPHPR) Learning Office and the CDC Foundation recognized the Deschutes County, Oregon Project Wildfire as a community effort that reflects and embodies FEMA's Whole Community approach to emergency management.

<http://blogs.cdc.gov/publichealthmatters/2012/12/project-wildfire-a-community-approach-to-surviving-wildfires/>

Emergency Preparedness and Response – (CDC)

Find resources for All Hazards and Specific Hazards preparedness.

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/hazards-all.asp>

Emergency Preparedness and Response Training Resources for Clinicians – (CDC)

Find online and in-person training centers and resources at

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/trainingresources.asp>

Natural Disasters and Severe Weather

Extreme Cold: A Prevention Guide to Promote Your Personal Health and Safety – (CDC)

The Extreme Cold Prevention Guide combines all of the key content of the CDC Winter Weather website into one downloadable, printable file. Printing this PDF file will ensure that you will have important winter weather health and safety information available even when you're without power or Internet service.

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/guide.asp>

Health and Safety Concerns for All Disasters – (CDC)

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/alldisasters.asp>

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)

MMWR publications are prepared by the CDC. To electronically subscribe, go to

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/mmwrsubscribe.html>

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- [Buprenorphine Prescribing Practices and Exposures Reported to a Poison Center — Utah, 2002–2011](#)
- [Early Warning Disease Surveillance After a Flood Emergency — Pakistan, 2010](#)

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- [Mumps Outbreak on a University Campus — California, 2011](#)
- [Update: Influenza Activity — United States, September 30–November 24, 2012](#)

Infectious, Vector-Borne and Zoonotic Diseases

NEW: Telebriefing on U.S. Influenza Activity and Vaccination Rates for Current Season – December 3 (CDC)

CDC Director, Dr. Thomas Frieden and Dr. Melinda Wharton, acting Director for CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases provide remarks on this year's influenza season.

http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2012/t1203_influenza_activity.html

Weekly Flu View – December 7 (CDC)

This is a weekly influenza surveillance report prepared by CDC Influenza Division. All data are preliminary and may change as CDC receives more reports.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>

Statement by HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius on Approval of Cell-Based Flu Vaccine – (HHS)

U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved our nation's first cell-based vaccine, Flucelvax, to protect against seasonal influenza. This newly approved vaccine is a milestone in protecting Americans' health during flu season and in future pandemics. In the event of an influenza pandemic, this cell-based technology could provide a more rapid start-up of the vaccine manufacturing process, potentially increasing our nation's health security.

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2012pres/11/20121120b.html>

Planning and Preparedness: Health Professionals and Seasonal Flu – (HHS)

Health care providers play an important role during flu season. The following guidance and information will assist health care providers and service organizations to plan and respond to seasonal flu.

<http://www.flu.gov/planning-preparedness/hospital/index.html#>

Travel Safety

Outbreak Notice: Yellow Fever in Sudan – December 7 (CDC)

The Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) of Sudan and the World Health Organization (WHO) recently announced that there is an outbreak of yellow fever in Sudan. This ongoing outbreak started in early September and has affected 33 localities in Greater Darfur. A total of 732 suspected cases, including 165 deaths, have been reported as of December 4.

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/outbreak-notice/yellow-fever-sudan.htm>

Current Travel Warnings – December 7 (US Department of State)

Travel Warnings are issued when long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable lead the State Department to recommend that Americans avoid or consider the risk of travel to that country. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff.

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html

Food, Drug and Device Safety

NEW: CDC Health Alert Network (HAN) – Update: Additional Contamination Identified in Medical Products from New England Compounding Center

– December 3 (CDC)

As part of the ongoing investigation of the multistate outbreak of fungal meningitis and other infections, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) continue to test medical products from the New England Compounding Center (NECC) in Framingham, Mass. CDC and FDA

have identified additional microbial contamination in unopened vials of betamethasone, cardioplegia, and triamcinolone solutions distributed and recalled from NECC.

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/HAN/han00337.asp>

Multistate Fungal Meningitis Outbreak Investigation: Clinician Guidance – (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/hai/outbreaks/clinicians/index.html>

Multistate Outbreak of Shiga Toxin-producing Escherichia coli O157:H7 Infections Linked to Organic Spinach and Spring Mix Blend – December 10 (CDC)

A total of 33 persons infected with the outbreak strain of Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli O157:H7 (STEC O157:H7) were reported from five states. This particular outbreak appears to be over. However, E. coli is still an important cause of human illness in the United States. Visit the CDC E. coli Web Page to learn more about E. coli, and steps people can take to reduce their risk of infection.

<http://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/2012/O157H7-11-12/index.html>

NEW: Heparin: Drug Safety Communication - Important Change to Heparin Container Labels to Clearly State the Total Drug Strength – December 6 (HHS/FDA)

FDA is notifying health care professionals, caregivers, and patients about a change to the container and carton labels for heparin products. This label change will require manufacturers of Heparin Lock Flush Solution, USP and Heparin Sodium Injection, USP to clearly state the strength of the entire container of the medication followed by how much of the medication is in 1 milliliter (mL).

<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch/SafetyInformation/SafetyAlertsforHumanMedicalProducts/ucm331168.htm>

MedWatch: The FDA Safety Information and Adverse Event Reporting Program – (HHS/FDA)

Your FDA gateway for clinically important safety information and reporting serious problems with human medical products.

<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch/default.htm>

FoodSafety.gov Reports FDA and USDA Food Recalls, Alerts, Reporting & Resources – (HHS/USDA/FDA/CDC/NIH)

For recalls and alerts by both FDA and USDA, or to report a problem or make inquiries.

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/recalls/recent/index.html>

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The Emergency Risk Communication Branch (ERCB) Clinician Communication Team works to enhance partners' knowledge of emerging threats and their effects on human populations, and to provide relevant, timely information to help manage these threats by developing and maintaining mechanisms for communication. The Clinician Communication Team is responsible for the management of all COCA products.

For information on this and other clinical issues or to send your feedback please contact us at coca@cdc.gov

ERCB offers a variety of free tools and resources to help you enhance your knowledge of emergency preparedness and response:

[CDC Health Partners Outreach Facebook page](#) - real time updates, guidance, and situational awareness for public health partners on Facebook.

[Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity](#) – resources for health care providers.

[Subscribe the COCA RSS Feed](#) - get notified of conference calls, updates, and CDC guidance for health providers.

[Crisis & Emergency Risk Communication \(CERC\) Training](#) - course on the fundamentals of CDC's Crisis & Emergency Risk Communication.

[Selective National Assessment Profiles \(SNAPS\)](#) - snapshots of state population data and local-level community profile information.

[Risk Communicator](#) –quarterly online newsletter providing guidance for emergency risk communication strategy.



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