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Special Points of Interest: The Tulsa Health Department offers free Influenza (Flu) vaccines during the Flu season. Visit our website at: www.tulsa-health.org or call 582-9355 for clinic hours and locations.

Disease of the Month: Meningitis

What is Meningitis?

Meningitis is an infection of the fluid of the a person's spinal cord and the fluid that surrounds the brain. Meningitis is usually caused by a viral or bacterial infection. Viral meningitis is generally less severe and resolves without specific treatment, while bacterial meningitis can be quite severe and may result in brain damage, hearing loss or learning disability. It is important to know which type of bacteria is causing the bacterial meningitis because use of antibiotics can prevent some types from spreading and infecting other people.

Today, Streptococcus pneumoniae and Neisseria meningitidis are



the leading causes of bacterial meningitis.

What are the symptoms of Meningitis?

High fever, headache and stiff neck are common symptoms of meningitis in anyone over the age of 2 years. Symptoms can develop over several hours or make 1-2 days. Other symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, discomfort looking into bright lights, confusion and sleepiness. In newborns and small infants the classic symptoms of fever, headache and neck stiffness may be absent or difficult to detect and the infant may appear slow or inactive, or be irritable, have vomiting, or be feeding poorly. As the disease

progresses, patients of any age may have seizures.

Is meningitis contagious?

Yes, some forms of bacterial meningitis are contagious. The bacteria are spread through the exchange of respiratory and throat secretions (i.e., coughing, kissing). Bacterial meningitis are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. However, sometimes the bacteria that cause meningitis have spread to other people who have had close or prolonged contact with a patient with meningitis caused by Neisseria meningitidis (also called meningococcal meningitis).

TIPS: Preventing the Spread of Bacterial Meningitis

Anyone can get bacterial meningitis because the bacteria that cause bacterial meningitis are communicable. Bacterial meningitis is a contagious infection that can be spread through the exchange of respiratory and throat secretions.

Meningococcal vaccine is available and is recommended for certain groups, such as college freshman living in dorms, to help prevent the infection. The following are additional ways to prevent the spread of bacterial meningitis:

- Wash hands especially after coughing and sneezing.
Keep hands and objects out of your mouth.
Disinfect materials of infected people; bleach is a good disinfectant.
Do not eat or drink after other people.
Do not share spoons, forks, drinking straws or glasses, chap sticks, lip glosses, and lipsticks.

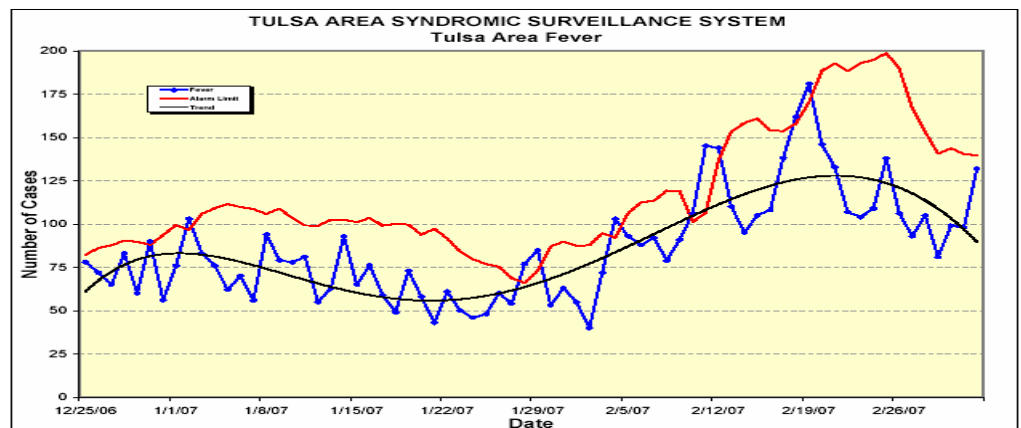
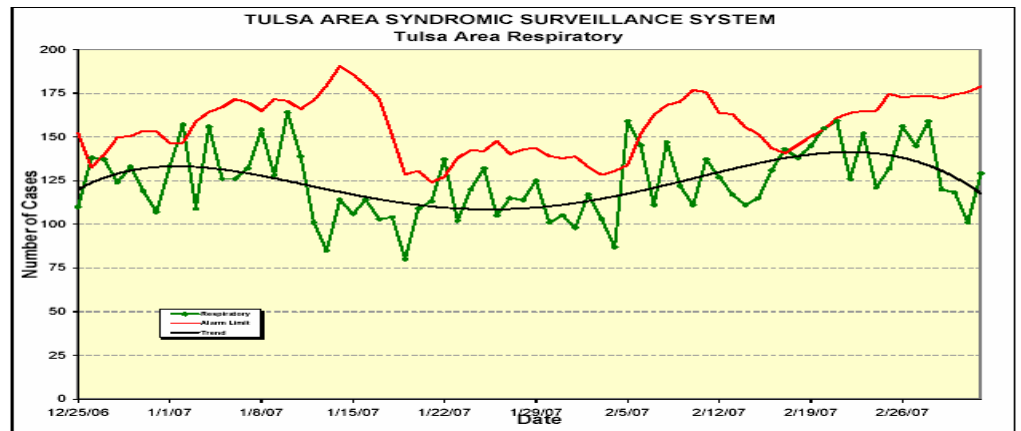
## REPORTED CASES OF SELECTED DISEASES

### CURRENT NEWS

Public health officials in multiple states, with the assistance of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are investigating a large multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Tennessee. *Salmonella* is a bacteria that causes the illness *Salmonellosis*. Most persons infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps 12-72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts 4-7 days and most persons recover without treatment. This particular *Salmonella* outbreak has been linked to Peter Pan peanut butter and Great Value peanut butter with a product code beginning with 2111. As of February 27th, 370 persons infected with the *Salmonella* Tennessee have been reported to CDC from 42 states. Among the 294 patients for whom clinical information is available, 60 (20%) were hospitalized. No deaths have been attributed to this infection. Onset dates, which are known for 256 patients, ranged from August 1, 2006—to February 16, 2007, and 62% of these illnesses began after December 1, 2006. Oklahoma has reported 11 cases of *Salmonella* Tennessee. FDA has advised consumers not to eat any Peter Pan or great Value peanut butter with a product code beginning with 2111.

Disease	Tulsa County		Oklahoma	
	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2007	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2006	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2007	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2006
<i>Campylobacter</i>	2	2	23	37
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	0	0	1	1
<i>Giardia</i>	0	4	12	21
Hepatitis A	0	2	0	3
Hepatitis B	19	2	2	12
Hepatitis C	33	67	1	284
Rabies (Animal)	0	1	0	1
<i>Salmonella</i>	4	13	20	39
<i>Shigella</i>	4	4	3	14

## Surveillance Report



The Tulsa Health Department collects Emergency Room chief complaint data to monitor the emergence of illnesses, such as influenza, in our community. For additional information on THD's county-wide surveillance system please [click here](#)