

“Central News”

A Quarterly Newsletter for Preschools & K-12 Schools



Central Michigan District
Health Department

Proudly serving the local
residents of Arenac, Clare,
Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and
Roscommon Counties since
1970.

GI Illness is Here

Rotavirus, Norovirus, Gastro-Intestinal Illness...they are all around us. All of these can be spread from person-to-person. What are some ways to decrease the chances of cases of gastro-intestinal illness in your facility this school year?

- Frequent thorough hand washing with warm water and soap by staff and students.
- Promptly disinfecting contaminated surfaces with household chlorine bleach-based cleaners (cleaning guidelines can be found on our website at www.CMDHD.org).
- Prompt handling (washing) of soiled clothing and linens.
- Avoiding food or water from sources that may be contaminated.
- Food Service employees should review safe food handling practices.
- Staff should be monitored closely for signs of the “stomach flu”. Any employee that has had any vomiting and/or diarrhea should not be allowed to work and should not be allowed to return to work for at least 3 days after the symptoms subside.
- Students should also be monitored and any student that has had any abdominal cramping, vomiting and/or diarrhea should be promptly sent home, and should not be allowed back for at least 3 days after symptoms subside.

It is very important to turn in your IP 10 reports (pink sheets) or submit them online every Friday before 12 noon to your local health department branch office Please be sure to specify the nature of the illnesses you are reporting.

Log onto our website (www.CMDHD.org) for more information on communicable diseases.

Preparedness Resources Available

The Department of Homeland Security has a variety of publications available, free of charge. You can access these by logging onto www.ready.gov.

A variety of resources can be found here for individuals, families, businesses and schools.

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FLU SHOTS ARE STILL AVAILABLE.

**Make an appointment to
get yours today. Flu
season lasts from
November—April.**

Go to www.michigan.gov/flu
for more information.

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Helpful Websites

www.CMDHD.org

www.henrythehand.com

www.immunize.org

Pertussis Information, Vaccination & Prevention

We have seen an increase in the number of confirmed cases of Pertussis (Whooping Cough) in the Central Michigan area and across Michigan in the past year. Whooping cough is a highly contagious disease of the respiratory system that is passed from person to person by respiratory secretions. At first, early symptoms of pertussis may include cold symptoms, such as a runny nose, sneezing, low-grade fever and a mild cough for about one week. In the second stage, which can last from 1 to 12 weeks, people experience episodes of numerous, rapid coughs with a distinctive sound. The cough is so harsh that many people wind up vomiting at the end of a coughing spell. Infants and young children often appear very ill and distressed and may turn blue and experience vomiting. In the third and final stage, which may last for months, people may experience episodes of numerous, rapid coughs, especially when they are diagnosed with respiratory infections. A person with pertussis is most infectious during the first stage of the disease and during the first two weeks after the cough begins. Antibiotic treatment taken as prescribed reduces the period of infectiousness.

The best treatment is prevention. Children usually get the vaccine in early infancy. Adolescents and adults are recommended to get a booster dose to help protect them against Pertussis. Two new vaccines are available to help provide protection from whooping cough. The new vaccines are licensed by the Food and Drug Administration for people 11 years through 64 years of age. Please contact your medical provider or your local Central Michigan District Health Department branch office for more information on these vaccines.

Other prevention steps that schools can take include:

- Encourage your staff to stay at home if they are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze (and tell others to do the same).
- Provide students an opportunity to wash their hands before lunch, after recess and after using the restroom. Hand sanitizers can also be used if multiple trips to the restroom facilities are not possible.
- If staff or students have a temperature of over 100 degrees, they should stay home. If the fever lasts more than 24 hours, they should consult with a medical provider.
- Educate staff and parents that the Pertussis vaccine is available for 11—64 year olds.
- If staff/students have been prescribed antibiotics for pertussis, they should stay home until they have taken antibiotics for 5 days. All of the medicine should be taken as directed.

NEW Food Safety Educational Opportunities Offered Through Central Michigan District Health Department

Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) is now able to offer three opportunities for local communities to learn more about food safety. The latest opportunity is the Consumer Food Safety Awareness Campaign, which is being offered as a result of CMDHD being awarded a \$16,800 education grant through the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

CMDHD is now offering free presentations (donations are welcome) to community groups interested in learning more about food safety in general. Presentations are generally 1 to 1 ½ hours in length. This option is designed for K-12 schools, universities, senior centers, churches and community organizations or groups.

Secondly, a Safe Food Worker class is being taught monthly in each of our six counties. The Safe Food Worker class is a service for new food workers, current food workers of restaurants, convenience stores, delis and other food preparation facilities, or those who are planning on becoming employed in these types of facilities. The course will cover the major issues relating to food safety including: personal hygiene; food from approved sources; inadequate cooking; improper holding and contaminated equipment. In addition, volunteers of local soup kitchens and churches are encouraged to participate. The cost of the Safe Food Worker class is \$10.00 per person. This class differs from the SERV-SAFE™ class that is also offered by the health department for owners and managers of food facilities.

Lastly, the SERV-SAFE™ class is a required class for owners/managers of licensed food facilities and covers all of the information an owner/manager should know based on the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) 2005 Food Code and the Michigan Food Law of 2000, as amended. The class is offered in a two ½ day format and costs \$168.00/person. A 75% score is required in order to successfully complete this class. After initial certification, recertification is required every 5 years for a cost of \$50.00. Upon successful completion of the program, applicants will receive a SERV-SAFE™ certificate.

For more information on these food safety programs, to register for Safe Food Worker or SERV-SAFE™ class, or schedule a presentation, please contact your local CMDHD department branch office or our website at www.CMDHD.org.