



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY *Messenger* Public Health Laboratory

May 2013

H7N9 Influenza.

WHO reports a total of 131 cases of H7N9 avian influenza infection confirmed by laboratory testing with 32 fatalities, detected in eight provinces of China and a single case in Taiwan. In its epidemiologic review, current as of Apr 29, the CDC said, of 82 confirmed case-patients with available information, 63 (77%) were exposed to live animals, mainly chickens (76%) and ducks (20%). The agency also said at least three family clusters of two or three cases have been confirmed, which could have involved limited human-to-human transmission. However, no transmission in the follow-up of 1,689 close contacts, including healthcare workers, has been detected, and serologic investigations are ongoing.

The San Luis Obispo County Public Health Laboratory has received special PCR reagents and is in the process of implementation of testing for the H7N9 virus.

Coccidioides infection increases

The CDC reported that cases of Coccidioides infection, also known as Valley Fever, increased eight-fold in the endemic region (Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah) of United States from 1998 to 2011. Although factors such as rainfall, drought, and temperature have been considered, the reasons for the increases are still unclear (MMWR vol62, March 29, 2013). An ongoing investigation of 28 cases of Valley Fever was also recently reported for solar farm workers in California Valley in Eastern San Luis Obispo County.

Typhoid Fever Alert

Promed Digest reported on May 3 that a San Francisco restaurant food handler was diagnosed with typhoid fever. Anyone who ate at the Nordstrom Cafe within the Nordstrom store in the Stonestown Galleria in San Francisco on 16, 17, 18, 20, or 27 Apr 2013 may be at risk. Public Health officials advise these individuals to see a healthcare provider right away if they start to experience symptoms such as fever, weakness, stomach pains, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of appetite. In some cases a rash of flat, rose-colored spots may appear. Symptoms usually begin within 8 to 14 days after exposure, but could potentially appear for up to 30 days.

Meningococcal disease in Tijuana and San Diego

Recent reports from Mexico describe 17 cases of meningococcal infection with five deaths this year. San Diego County Public Health has reported two cases of meningococcal disease including a 36-year-old man who died last week. No travel to Mexico was reported for these two cases, but these individuals had contacts with others who may have traveled.