

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASE



FALL 2015

NEWSLETTER



## HEAD LICE/ PEDICULOSIS

Head lice are small insects that live on the human scalp. They feed on human blood several times a day. These parasites make small bites in the scalp to suck blood. They lay their eggs (nits) on individual hair shafts.



### SYMPTOMS

**Severe itching** is usually the first symptom. Itching is caused due to a substance in the louse saliva which is transmitted during the bite. The substance prevents blood from clotting and causes an allergic reaction in the host. The constant itching usually leads to visual discovery of live lice on the scalp or nits attached to the hair shaft, ¼ inch from scalp.

### COMMUNICABILITY

Head lice are found worldwide and can infest any human. Lice move by crawling; they do not fly or jump. Lice are communicable as long as they are alive. Head-to-head contact with a person who has head lice is the most common way to transfer lice. Sharing of hair brushes, combs, hats, helmets, clothing, towels, pillows or bedding will also spread lice. Head lice are also found on beds, furniture and car seats. Dogs, cats, and other pets do not play a role in spreading human head lice. The adult female louse will lay about 5 eggs daily at the base of hair shafts. The nits are attached to the hair with a glue like substance. The nits are oval-shaped and can be very hard to see. The nits will hatch every 7-10 days.

### TREATMENT

Lice eradication is a two part process. First contact your physician immediately about treatment medications for those with lice. Over the years, lice have become resistant to over-the-counter treatments. New treatment medications are available through your physician. The objective is to immediately kill live lice and remove all nits from the hair. Purchase a steel fine tooth comb and use a wet comb daily to remove all nits. The second part of the process is to sanitize your home environment. Machine launder all bedding, towels, hats and clothing in hot water and dry on high heat for 30 minutes daily. Items that are unable to be laundered should be sealed in a plastic bag for two weeks. Soak all hair brushes and combs in very hot water. Vacuum the entire home daily including all furniture, beds and car seats. Dispose of the vacuum bag frequently. It may take 30 days to eliminate a lice infestation.

### PREVENTION

Avoid direct head-to-head contact with anyone known to have lice. Do not share hair-related personal items, hats, clothing, bedding or pillows. Avoid sleepovers and slumber parties during lice outbreaks. Routinely check everyone in your family for lice. By the time symptoms are present the environment has been contaminated with lice.

### REFERENCES

[www.headlice.org](http://www.headlice.org)    [www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice)    [www.publichealth.org](http://www.publichealth.org)

## What's New with Human Papillomavirus Vaccination?

In March 2015 the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) published guidance routinely recommending the use of Gardasil 9<sup>®</sup> vaccine for prevention of human papillomavirus (HPV) infection. The new formulation offers protection against HPV strains 31, 33, 45, 52, and 58 in addition to the 4 strains contained in the original Gardasil<sup>®</sup> vaccine (6, 11, 16 and 18). The inclusion of additional strains offers increased protection against cervical, vulvar, vaginal and anal cancers. The ACIP guidance encourages routine vaccination of females and males at 11-12 years of age. Vaccination is also recommended for females age 13 through 26 years and males 13-21 years who have not been previously vaccinated. Males 22 through 26 years of age may also be vaccinated. The vaccination series consists of 3 doses administered over a 6 month time span. Vaccination costs are covered by the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program for females and males through the age of 18 who are enrolled in Medicaid, uninsured, underinsured, or American Indian/Alaskan Native. Coverage through commercial insurance carriers will vary among plans. For more information on Gardasil 9<sup>®</sup> vaccine, contact your healthcare provider or the Saginaw County Department of Public Health Immunization Program at (989) 758-3840 or visit [www.saginawpublichealth.org](http://www.saginawpublichealth.org).



# INFLUENZA (FLU)

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by various influenza viruses. The flu can cause mild to severe illness, and even death. Each year in the United States, up to 20% of the population is infected with influenza accounting for greater than 200,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 – 49,000 related deaths.

## SYMPTOMS

- abrupt onset of fever (101-102°F)
- dry cough
- runny or stuffy nose
- headaches
- chills
- sore throat
- muscle or body aches
- fatigue (very tired)



## COMMUNICABILITY

Most often, the flu is spread by direct contact with droplets transferred from one person to another through coughing, sneezing and talking. Flu viruses can also be spread by touching surfaces or objects with flu virus on them and then touching one's own mouth, eyes, or nose. It is possible for a sick individual to infect others before showing signs and symptoms of illness. Healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 2 days before symptoms develop and up to 5-7 days after becoming ill. Adults and children with weakened immune systems may be able to infect others for an even longer period of time.

## TREATMENT

Flu symptoms can be managed with and without medication. The most common treatments include:

- Over-the-counter medications (pain reliever/fever reducer, cough suppressants, etc.)
- Rest
- Drinking plenty of fluids like water, broth, and sports drinks/electrolyte beverages
- Gargling with warm salt water to soothe a sore throat

Your healthcare provider may also opt to prescribe an antiviral medication which can decrease the length and severity of the illness (if diagnosed within the first 2 days of exhibiting symptoms).

## PREVENTION

One of the best ways to prevent the flu is to receive a flu vaccination. During the 2015-2016 flu season, flu vaccine will be manufactured containing either 3 (trivalent) or 4 (quadrivalent) viral strains, representing viruses recently circulating world-wide. Due to the varying composition of the vaccine each year, and declining immunity throughout the season, annual vaccination using the current vaccine is required. There are 2 different types of flu vaccine available:

- The "flu shot" is an inactivated (dead) vaccine and is approved for use in people 6 months of age and older, including healthy people, people with chronic medical conditions and pregnant women
- The "nasal spray" is a live, weakened vaccine and is approved for use in people 2-49 years of age in the absence of pregnancy and chronic medical conditions

Full antibody protection develops against influenza virus infections about two weeks after vaccination. It is important to remember that flu vaccination will not cause flu infection or stop any infectious process already in progress. Yearly flu vaccination should begin in September, or as soon as vaccine is available, and continue throughout the flu season. The flu season can begin early as October with seasonal flu activity peaking in January or later. You should contact your healthcare provider to receive the flu vaccine as soon as it becomes available. Flu vaccine is also available at the Saginaw County Department of Public Health (SCDPH) for individuals 6 months of age and older. The SCDPH accepts Medicaid, Medicare, Blue Care Network, Health Plus, Priority Health and some Blue Cross Blue Shield plans for flu vaccine administration. For clinic hours or more information call (989) 758-3840 or visit [www.saginawpublichealth.org](http://www.saginawpublichealth.org).

## REFERENCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases* 13<sup>th</sup> ed. Hamborsky, J., Kroger, A., & Wolfe, S. eds. Washington DC: Public Health Foundation, 2015.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Influenza (Flu). Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Treatment for the Flu. Retrieved from [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).



**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE  
REPORTED FOR SAGINAW COUNTY  
FOR THE QUARTER  
07/01/2015-09/30/2015**

Disease	No. Reported
AIDS, AGGREGATE	0
ANIMAL BITE	49
CAMPYLOBACTER	6
CHIKUNGUNYA	0
CHLAMYDIA (Genital)	316
CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS	2
FLU LIKE DISEASE	53
GASTROINTESTINAL ILLNESS	2
GIARDISSIS	1
GONORRHEA	107
HEAD LICE	0
HEPATITIS B ACUTE	0
HEPATITIS B CHRONIC	2
HEPATITIS C ACUTE	0
HEPATITIS C CHRONIC	14
INFLUENZA	0
LEGIONELLOSIS	5
MENINGITIS-ASEPTIC	8
MENINGITIS-BACTERIAL OTHER	1
MUMPS	0
MYOBACTERIUM	0
PERTUSSIS	0
RABIES	0
SALMONELLOSIS	3
SHIGELLOSIS	2
SHINGLES	1
STREP THROAT	5
STREPTOCOCCUS PNEUMONIA, INVASIVE	5
SYPHILLIS-LATE LATENT	0
TUBERCULOSIS	0
VZ INFECTION, UNSPECIFIED	2
YERSINIA ENTERITIS	0

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE YTD  
REPORTED FOR SAGINAW COUNTY  
01/01/2015-09/30/2015**

Disease	No. Reported
AIDS, AGGREGATE	0
ANIMAL BITE	91
CAMPYLOBACTER	10
CHIKUNGUNYA	0
CHLAMYDIA (Genital)	923
CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS	5
FLU LIKE DISEASE	4335
GASTROINTESTINAL ILLNESS	2244
GIARDISSIS	3
GONORRHEA	272
HEAD LICE	99
HEPATITIS B ACUTE	0
HEPATITIS B CHRONIC	13
HEPATITIS C ACUTE	1
HEPATITIS C CHRONIC	57
INFLUENZA	43
LEGIONELLOSIS	7
MENINGITIS-ASEPTIC	11
MENINGITIS-BACTERIAL OTHER	3
MUMPS	0
MYOBACTERIUM	1
PERTUSSIS	3
RABIES	0
SALMONELLOSIS	11
SHIGELLOSIS	5
SHINGLES	1
STREP THROAT	116
STREPTOCOCCUS PNEUMONIA, INVASIVE	17
SYPHILLIS-LATE LATENT	2
TUBERCULOSIS	1
VZ INFECTION, UNSPECIFIED	4
YERSINIA ENTERITIS	0

Please visit our website at [www.saginawpublichealth.org](http://www.saginawpublichealth.org) where our communicable disease pamphlets are available.

This newsletter is provided to all Saginaw County healthcare providers, hospitals, schools, local colleges, universities, urgent care facilities and local media centers.

**If you would like to receive this newsletter by e-mail please submit your e-mail address to: [sellison@saginawcounty.com](mailto:sellison@saginawcounty.com)**

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