



Epi-Center



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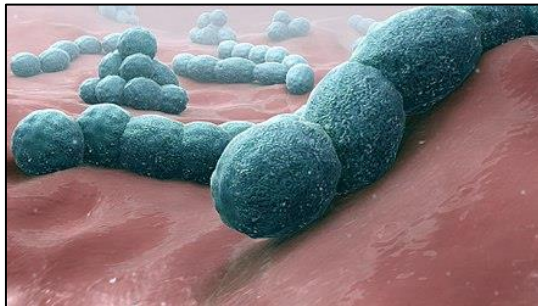
Oh My! Measles, Meningitis, and Other General Notifiables

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases: Measles & Meningitis

MEASLES

As of 04/11/2024, the Georgia Department of Public Health (GA DPH) confirmed 3 cases of measles, the most recent one in an unvaccinated individual traveling with a group of international students. GA DPH is continuing to work with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to identify and contact anyone who may have been exposed to the individual and prevent further spread of measles.

Measles symptoms include high fever, runny nose, and watery eyes, followed by the appearance of a rash of tiny, red spots that breaks out and spreads to the rest of the body. The CDC recommends children receive their first dose of the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine, which is safe and effective, between 12-15 months of age and a second dose between 4-6 years old. More than 95% of those who receive a single dose of MMR will develop immunity for all 3 viruses, with a second dose boosting immunity (typically enhancing protection to 98%). For more information and updates, please visit the [GA DPH page for measles](#).



MENINGITIS

Meningococcal disease is another vaccine-preventable disease of concern, with two counties in the district each reporting one case. The main forms are meningitis (infection of the linings and fluid around the brain/spinal cord) and meningococcal bacteremia (severe bacterial infection in the blood). It is caused by *Neisseria meningitidis*, found only in humans. Major symptoms for this disease include high fever, headache, and stiff neck.

It is spread through close contact by droplets of saliva from an infected patient or an asymptomatic carrier. Those who live in group settings or are immunocompromised have an increased risk of meningococcal disease.

Meningococcal disease can be treated through antibiotics, but treatment must begin as soon as possible, as the disease can be deadly in a matter of hours. However, it is preventable—preteens and teens should get one dose of the MenACWY vaccine at either age 11 or 12 and get a booster at age 16. Teens and young adults 16-23 may also be vaccinated with the MenB vaccine. Those at higher risk should be vaccinated as well.

Other General Notifiables

Between January and March 2024, the District 2 Public Health's Epidemiology Department investigated 466 disease reports, with *Haemophilus influenzae* and *Streptococcus spp.* bacteria contributing 90 (19.3%) of these reports. Even as the weather becomes warmer, remind yourself to stay vigilant against respiratory disease!

Remember! All county health departments in District 2 offer vaccine services!

District 2 Public Health Serves the Following Counties: Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, & White

Extra, extra! Read all about the STI Awareness Week Events!

A Primer on the Burden of STIs in the District

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) greatly impact teens and young adults, sexually active LGBTQ+ populations, pregnant individuals, and non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic populations. Between 01/2024 and 03/2024, there were 191 chlamydia cases, 40 gonorrhea cases, and 70 syphilis cases. Of these cases, 43.5% were between the ages of 18 and 24 years old, 30.6% were of Hispanic ethnicity, and 24.9% were non-Hispanic Black or African American.

District 2 Public Health strives to provide the community with the knowledge, tools, and resources for getting tested. We are committed to combatting STIs, and all county health departments in the district offer confidential testing and treatment services.

STI Awareness Week at District 2

During STI Awareness Week (04/14 – 04/20), the District 2 (D2) Communicable Disease Specialist and EPI teams held their annual STI awareness events at the Butler Park Pavilion in Hall County, GA. Under CDC's Get Yourself Tested (GYT) campaign, the week consisted of a walk (#BeSeenWearingGreen) and an Expo along with STI testing and education in all D2 health departments. Community members were encouraged to engage in conversations about preventing STIs through testing and education while reducing shame, stigma, and misinformation, thus leading to safer sex practices and STI prevention among young people.

WEDNESDAY, 04/17/2024: STI AWARENESS WALK

Approximately 50 people attended the walk and the raffle afterwards. Multiple prizes and merchandise were given out.



THURSDAY, 04/18/2024: HEALTH EXPO

The next day, registrants totaled 128 and perused the tables of 21 community services and local vendors/businesses active in District 2. Many families also walked home with boxes of household meal ingredients, courtesy of the Georgia Mountain Food Bank. Nursing students offered free blood pressure checks, and free STI information and testing were also available at this event. The mayor of Gainesville, Sam Couvillon, and the County Commissioner, Richard Higgins, also attended and gave a proclamation celebrating April 2024 as STI Awareness Month.



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TUESDAY, 04/30/2024: FRIENDLY COMPETITION

There were two inter-county competitions that took place over the course of STI Awareness Month and finally concluded on April 30th. The winner of the Bulletin Board Competition was Hart County, and the winner of the Rapid Syphilis Testing Competition was Hall County, with 18 tests done for April.



District 2 would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the health departments that participated in this challenge; your hard work is what makes patients healthy and these events successful.

We look forward to seeing everyone again next year in April!

Disease Reporting

Information on disease reporting can be found on the GA DPH website under the [Notifiable Disease Reporting Requirements](#) section. All notifiable diseases should be reported within seven days or sooner.



<i>Immediate Reporting</i>	<i>Reporting Within 7 Days</i>
Phone: (770) 519-7661 Public Health Line: 1-(866) 782-4584	Email: DPHDistrict2epi@gets.onmicrosoft.com
Fax: (770) 535-5848	Online: State Electronic Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (SENDSS)

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