

EPI-Center Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 2 | 2025: April – June



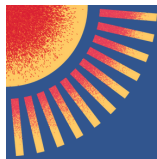
Foodborne and Waterborne Illness

It's that time of the year again! Summer has arrived, and with it, water-/foodborne illness.

Foodborne illness (also known as enteric disease and more informally as food poisoning) is commonly caused by consumption of contaminated food or drinks. Contaminated bodies of water (such as a natural river or indoor pool) can also make you sick, in which case it is called a waterborne illness. **Symptoms to watch out for include nausea, stomach pain, fever, vomiting, and diarrhea.**

To avoid infection and spread of enteric disease, practice proper handwashing and safe handling/preparation of food items. Cook meat and eggs to safe internal temperatures, and clean/disinfect surfaces often. Ensure food is thawed safely, and place items in the refrigerator within two hours. To avoid waterborne illness, do not ingest from any body of water (especially if it has not been treated properly!). For both food-/waterborne illness, make sure you wash laundry well too.

Between April and June this year, there were **over 100 cases** alone for two of the most common foodborne illnesses *Campylobacteriosis* and *Salmonellosis*. There has also been a dramatic increase in the number of reported *Legionella* cases when comparing the first two quarters of 2024 (**6**) and 2025 (**26**).



Back to School: Common Infectious Diseases

Most often, we find that the outbreaks that occur in schools are due to vaccine-preventable diseases such as varicella (chickenpox) and pertussis. In District 2, there were 3 varicella and 9 pertussis cases between August and December of 2023, compared to 14 varicella (367% increase) and 36 pertussis (300% increase) cases for the same period in 2024.

To prepare for the upcoming school year, we strongly recommend parents/guardians and students to prioritize immunizations. **All county health departments in District 2 offer vaccine services, so reach out today!**

The below QR code is the 2022 list of common infectious diseases in children, compiled by the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA).



Recap of Quarter 2

Between April and June, we:

- Recruited a pediatric clinic into the Enhanced Pertussis Surveillance Program to improve testing and timely diagnosis in Forsyth, and
- Collaborated with Foothills AHEC to mentor pre-medicine undergraduates in public health research.



We Need YOUR Input!

Please take and distribute our community survey; **CLICK HERE!**

Heat-Related Illness

Exposure to extreme heat or work in hot environment can lead to heat-related illnesses. These can include:

- Heat stroke – most serious, occurring when the body can no longer control its temperature (and sweating mechanism fails), which rises to 106°F or higher in 10-15 minutes;
- Heat exhaustion – Too much sweating leads to excessive loss of water and salt; and
- Heat cramps; heat syncope; heat rash; and/or rhabdomyolysis.

For more information on symptoms and first aid for heat-related illnesses, please view the CDC page on heat stress [here](#).