Communicable Disease

Learning Objectives

Participants will learn:

1. Where to find communicable disease information

2. Why a relationship with the local health department (LHD) is important, and ideas for strengthening this relationship

3. School nurse roles and responsibilities related to communicable disease outbreaks and common problems in the school setting.

For questions, contact:
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Utah Department of Health
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rward@utah.gov
Where can I find communicable disease information?

Here are some helpful references. Policies may differ between states, counties, school districts, etc. Please work with your LHD to determine the best course of action for the specific situation.


Utah Department of Health (UDOH) Communicable Disease plans, reporting forms and fact sheets: [http://health.utah.gov/epi/phdepts/a-z_list.html](http://health.utah.gov/epi/phdepts/a-z_list.html)


Links to all Utah Local Health Departments: [http://www.ualhd.org/members.html](http://www.ualhd.org/members.html)


Working with the Local Health Department (LHD)

How can I strengthen a relationship with my LHD?

✓ Build on past relationships… or reach out and create a new one!
✓ Introduce yourself with an in-person visit, phone call, or email
✓ Connect during immunization conferences
✓ Partner with the LHD for flu shot clinics, preparedness exercises, studies, etc.
✓ Invite LHD staff to participate in wellness committees, training, or school events

When should I contact my LHD for help?

✓ If you suspect an outbreak (often when two or more students ill with similar symptoms)
✓ If you suspect an unusual or emerging disease
✓ Anytime you need communicable disease assistance or support
How can my LHD help with communicable disease situations?

✔ In any communicable disease situation, your LHD can:
  - provide guidance on excluding ill students
  - advise prevention and control measures
  - speak to worried staff and relatives
  - provide fact sheets and educational information

✔ In an outbreak situation, your LHD can:
  - provide help, advice and support
  - review the situation daily including prevention and control measures
  - speak to worried staff and relatives and/or reinforce exclusion rule!
  - provide fact sheets and educational information
  - declare the outbreak over
## How do I contact my LHD?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Department</th>
<th>Communicable Disease Contact</th>
<th>Counties covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bear River</td>
<td>Leona Goodsell 435-792-6541 <a href="mailto:lgoodsell@brhd.org">lgoodsell@brhd.org</a></td>
<td>Box Elder, Cache, Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Central           | Sevier: Alicia Beckstead 435-896-5451  
Juab County: Patti Bowles 435-623-0696  
North Sanpete: Mindy Brotherson 435-462-2449  
South Sanpete: Debbie Lindsey 435-835-2231  
Piute: Melissa Gleave 435-577-2521  
Wayne: Ron Steege 435-577-2521  
West Millard: Shauna Nelson 435-864-3612  
Nursing Director: Sue Hildebrand 435-896-5451  
Epidemiologist: Louise Saw 435-817-2710 (cell) | Juab, Millard, Piute, Sanpete, Sevier, Wayne |
| Davis County      | Reporting Only: 801-525-5220  
General CD Questions: 801-525-5200  
Director, Wendy Garcia: 801-525-5202 | Davis |
| Salt Lake County  | Andrea Price or Mary Hill 385-468-4194 | Salt Lake |
| Southeastern Utah | Brady Bradford 435-637-3671 | Carbon, Emery, Grand, San Juan |
| Southwest Utah    | Susan Peck 435-986-2551 [speck@swuhealth.org](mailto:speck@swuhealth.org) | Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane, Washington |
| Summit County     | Park City: Carolyn Rose 333-1504  
North Summit: Jean Paskett 336-3228  
South Summit: Stephanie Hurt 783-4351 | Summit |
| Tooele County     | Louise Ekenstam 435-277-2369 | Tooele |
| TriCounty         | Roe (Brent) McDonald 435-247-1197 | Daggett, Duchesne, Uintah |
| Utah County       | Lisa Guerra 801-851-7037 | Utah |
| Wasatch County    | Chris Smoot 435-657-3264 (office) 435-503-4018 (cell) | Wasatch |
| Weber-Morgan       | Amy Carter 801-399-7234 [acarter@co.weber.ut.us](mailto:acarter@co.weber.ut.us) | Weber, Morgan |
| Utah Department of Health | Bureau of Epidemiology 801-538-6191 | For additional assistance |
What are my roles & responsibilities during an outbreak?

✓ Contain the outbreak and prevent further illness
✓ Collaborate with LHD throughout the outbreak
✓ Serve as liaison for LHD, school personnel, parents, and students

How can I prepare for an outbreak?

✓ Locate records for vaccine exempt-students (name list, forms)
✓ Become familiar with communicable diseases (signs and symptoms, helpful resources, current/common outbreaks)
✓ Establish and maintain relationships with partners:
  - School(s): attendance secretaries, teachers, administrators, custodians
  - LHD
✓ Provide training to school partners as needed
If I suspect an outbreak, what should I do first?

- Notify the LHD
- Create a list of ill individuals
- Ensure proper clean up and prevention efforts are in place
- If food is suspected as the cause of illness, save, label and refrigerate it. That way, the food can be tested later to confirm if it caused illness.

What other actions may be needed during an outbreak?

Here are some possibilities. As every outbreak is different, your LHD will provide guidance specific to each situation.

- Notify parents & staff
- Provide education on signs/symptoms to watch for
- Exclude symptomatic and vaccine-exempt\(^1\) students & staff
  - If vaccine exempt, send letter & copy of exemption
  - Follow up by phone – explain options for return to school
  - Update parents throughout outbreak
  - Work with administration & teachers to support students with schoolwork
- Work with attendance secretary and follow up on reported ill students
- Answer questions and concerns of parents, staff, students
- Assist with/encourage prophylaxis as needed; if no insurance, refer to LHD
- Contact health care providers to ensure correct testing is performed

\(^1\) For vaccine preventable disease outbreaks
What are the guidelines for controlling head lice in schools?

- Follow school district policy
- Maintain confidentiality
  - Avoid embarrassing the student
- Exclude children until one day after first treatment, as necessary, in conjunction with school district policy
  - Avoid implementing a “no nit” policy
- Educate staff and parents
How can I encourage parents to vaccinate their children?

✓ Take time to listen
  - Pay attention

✓ Solicit and welcome questions
  - Ask open-ended questions

✓ Keep the conversation going
  - Don’t be offended by parents’ research and long list of questions

✓ Science vs. anecdote?
  - Base your approach on your knowledge of the family
  - Watch and listen

✓ Acknowledge benefits and risks
  - Address side effects
  - Remind parents of benefits to their child and to others (herd immunity)

✓ Respect parents’ authority
  - Talk respectfully
  - Show genuine concern
  - Build trust

✓ Provide resources and referrals