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Recommendations for Camps

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2010 PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAMPS IN WEST VIRGINIA

Summer camps are one of the safest places for children to be in the summer time. However, every year a few camps will experience outbreaks of infectious disease such as influenza, “stomach flu” (norovirus), mumps, etc. Here are a few suggestions to prevent and control infectious disease outbreaks in summer camp.

Important Actions

- Be prepared to prevent infectious disease outbreaks
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of infectious disease outbreaks
- Report infectious disease outbreaks immediately
- Document the vaccination status of staff and campers
- Know how to get help

Be Prepared to Prevent Infectious Disease Outbreaks

- Work with your local public health officials to establish lines of communication.
- Work with your local public health officials to develop plans for preventing and addressing potential disease outbreaks in camp settings. Plans should include:
 - Adequate and accessible hand and personal hygiene facilities such as handwashing stations with liquid hand soap and running water, alcohol-based hand rubs, disposable wipes, and household cleaning products,
 - Know what to do if campers or staff become sick, including how to separate them from others, and
 - Know when to seek additional medical evaluation,
- Review West Virginia state laws regarding public health–related camp requirements. See <http://apps.sos.wv.gov/csrdocs/pdfdocs/64-18.pdf>
- Know about recent health issues that have impacted camps:
 - **Mumps:** Since August 2009, a mumps outbreak that originated in a summer camp has been ongoing in several states. It is possible that mumps cases may occur in camps again this

summer. The best protection against mumps is two doses of mumps vaccine (usually given as the measles-mumps-rubella, MMR, vaccine); however, crowded living conditions (as in a dormitory or camp) can promote the spread of mumps virus even among vaccinated persons. Information on recognition and prevention of mumps in camp settings can be found at <http://www.wvdep.org/Portals/31/PDFs/IDEP/mumps/mumps-camp.pdf>

- **H1N1 Flu:** In summer 2009, several camps experienced outbreaks of H1N1 flu virus. Although H1N1 disease activity is currently low and almost half of WV children have been vaccinated against H1N1, it is possible that camps could see this virus occur this summer. 2010 guidance on H1N1 flu for camps can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/camp.htm>.
- **Norovirus ('stomach flu')**: One of the most common causes of outbreaks in any setting, norovirus can spread rapidly from one person to another or from contaminated food or water. Rapid isolation of ill people and thorough environmental cleaning are critical to control. For more information, see: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/norovirus-ga.htm>.

Recognize when to call your local health department:

- Call your local health department if there are unusual numbers of campers and/or staff with
 - Vomiting and/or diarrhea
 - Fever and cough or sore throat
 - Fever and rash
 - Other febrile illness

Report disease outbreaks immediately

- Notify your local health department immediately if there is a suspected outbreak in your camp.
- Your local health department can guide you to:
 - Prevent and control the spread of illness
 - Educate campers and staff and parents

Document the Vaccination Status of Staff and Campers

Many infectious diseases can be prevented by vaccinations. It is important to:

- Maintain vaccination records for all campers and staff; the records should be readily accessible in case an outbreak should occur. Documentation
 - can be in the form of a vaccination record (shot card), pre-entrance health form, or an electronic immunization record.
 - should include dates of vaccination.
- Communicate vaccine recommendations or requirements to campers and staff, including international staff, prior to attending camp.

Know How to get Help

Your state and local health departments are committed to the health and safety of all West Virginia residents. For question call your local health department: Cabell-Huntington Health Department at (304) 523-6483 or the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health at -1-800-423-1271 (in WV) or 304-558-5358.