

Communicable Diseases Weekly Report

Epi-Week 19: 05 May 2014 – 11 May 2014

In summary, we report:

- [Salmonellosis alert](#) – *Salmonella* Java cases in the Northern Beaches linked to bandicoots.
- [Influenza vaccination for children](#) – reminder on recommended vaccines
- [Chikungunya](#) – one new case acquired in Tonga
- [Summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW](#)

For further information on infectious diseases and alerts see the [Infectious Diseases](#) webpage.

Follow the [A to Z of Infectious Diseases](#) link for more information on specific diseases.

For links to other surveillance reports, including influenza reports, see the [NSW Health Infectious Diseases Reports](#) webpage.

[Salmonella Java](#)

The Northern Sydney Local Health District's Public Health Unit has issued an [alert](#) following a rise in cases of *Salmonella* Java (*Salmonella enterica* Paratyphi B variant Java) in children from the Northern Beaches, with transmission linked to bandicoots and their droppings.

To date in 2014 there have been 19 cases confirmed on the Northern Beaches and while some have been traced to play area sand ([a previously identified risk factor](#)), it appears that many children may have been infected by contact with bandicoot droppings around their homes.

Salmonellosis is a form of gastroenteritis caused by *Salmonella* bacteria, which are commonly found in animals. Symptoms of salmonellosis include fever, headache, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting. Symptoms usually start around six to 72 hours after ingestion of the organism. Symptoms typically last for four to seven days, but can continue for much longer.

Occasionally hospitalisation is required for management of dehydration, particularly in young babies, elderly people and those with weakened immune systems.

Follow the link for more information on [salmonella notifications](#).

Further information about bandicoots can be found at the Department of the Environment & Heritage [bandicoot website](#).

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[Influenza Vaccination for Children](#)

As we approach the start of the influenza season it is important to highlight the importance of raising the levels of vaccine coverage among people at higher risk of influenza complications. Free influenza vaccine is available under the [National Immunisation Program](#) for individuals aged 6 months and over with medical conditions predisposing to severe influenza.

It is also important to remember that one of the influenza vaccines, bioCSL's Fluvax® vaccine, is not registered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for use in children less than 5 years of age due to an increased risk of fever and febrile convulsions, and is not recommended for children 5-10 years of age if alternatives are available.

NSW Health ensures that all deliveries of publicly-funded influenza vaccine include an alternative product (Vaxigrip® or Fluarix®) that can be used for this group. Vaxigrip® or Fluarix® are also strongly recommended to be used in preference to Fluvax® for eligible children 5 years to under 10 years of age.

In addition, NSW Health uses every opportunity to remind immunisation providers about these recommendations and to urge that they have processes in place to ensure that Fluvax® cannot inadvertently be given to children less than 5 years of age.

More information about the 2014 influenza vaccination program is available [here](#).

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Chikungunya infection

One new case of chikungunya infection was notified this week (Table 1). The case was in a traveller recently returned from working in the Kingdom of Tonga.

This is the seventh case of chikungunya infection notified this year, but the first case third acquired in Tonga. The [outbreak of chikungunya infection](#) is reported to be continuing in the Kingdom of Tonga.

Chikungunya infections are acquired by people after being bitten by a mosquito that is infected with the chikungunya virus. Symptoms include fever, rash and sore joints, and so may sometimes be mistaken for dengue infection. Chikungunya infections are reported from many parts of Africa, South-East Asia, India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea and other parts of the Pacific.

Many Pacific nations are currently experiencing outbreaks of confirmed or suspect arbovirus infections, including chikungunya, [dengue](#) and Zika virus. Follow the [link](#) for more information.

Travellers to affected areas including Tonga should avoid mosquito bites to prevent infection. Mosquitoes that carry chikungunya virus (*Aedes* spp.) are most active during the day and tend to come indoors and hide in cool dark places such as under tables.

Travellers should cover up as much as possible with loose-fitting clothing and covered footwear, use an effective mosquito repellent on all exposed skin and re-apply every few hours (according to instructions) as protection wears off from perspiration, particularly in the heat or during exercise. The best mosquito repellents contain Diethyl Toluamide (DEET) or Picaridin.

[Malaria](#), another serious mosquito-borne infection, also continues to be a risk for travellers to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Travellers to these countries should seek advice from their doctor or a travel medicine clinic regarding anti-malaria prophylaxis 4-6 weeks before they leave.

Follow the link for more information on [preventing mosquito infections](#).

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Summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW

The following table summarises notifiable conditions activity over the reporting period (Table 1).

Table 1. NSW notifiable conditions from 04 May to 04 May 2014, by date received.*

| | | Weekly | | Year to date | | | Full Year | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|------|------|-----------|-------|
| | | This week | Last week | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | 2013 | 2012 |
| Enteric Diseases | Cryptosporidiosis | 12 | 8 | 204 | 820 | 366 | 1131 | 655 |
| | Giardiasis | 61 | 66 | 1209 | 1005 | 974 | 2240 | 2012 |
| | Listeriosis | 1 | 0 | 10 | 20 | 16 | 33 | 36 |
| | Rotavirus | 8 | 4 | 126 | 174 | 259 | 508 | 1759 |
| | STEC/VTEC | 1 | 0 | 20 | 15 | 9 | 24 | 14 |
| | Salmonellosis | 78 | 102 | 2065 | 1737 | 1460 | 3485 | 2942 |
| | Shigellosis | 2 | 1 | 107 | 55 | 61 | 136 | 131 |
| | Typhoid | 2 | 0 | 19 | 32 | 23 | 58 | 43 |
| Respiratory Diseases | Influenza | 69 | 53 | 1039 | 636 | 403 | 8402 | 8037 |
| | Tuberculosis | 3 | 2 | 131 | 162 | 173 | 438 | 469 |
| Sexually Transmissible Infections | Chlamydia | 477 | 521 | 8607 | 8219 | 8696 | 21079 | 21262 |
| | Gonorrhoea | 86 | 125 | 1763 | 1740 | 1519 | 4268 | 4115 |
| Vaccine Preventable Diseases | Adverse Event Following Immunisation | 1 | 4 | 111 | 333 | 136 | 508 | 269 |
| | Haemophilus influenzae type b | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 2 |
| | Meningococcal Disease | 1 | 1 | 13 | 11 | 22 | 48 | 68 |
| | Pertussis | 35 | 36 | 648 | 982 | 2983 | 2378 | 5998 |
| | Pneumococcal Disease (Invasive) | 7 | 4 | 98 | 135 | 124 | 489 | 564 |
| Vector Borne Diseases | Barmah Forest | 8 | 4 | 93 | 212 | 156 | 440 | 352 |
| | Chikungunya | 1 | 0 | 7 | 9 | 0 | 22 | 1 |
| | Dengue | 8 | 5 | 164 | 106 | 144 | 300 | 287 |
| | Malaria | 1 | 3 | 35 | 40 | 23 | 93 | 68 |
| | Ross River | 23 | 22 | 206 | 232 | 359 | 513 | 596 |
| Zoonotic | Psittacosis | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 8 | 21 |

* Notes on Table 1: NSW Notifiable Conditions activity

- Data cells represent the number of case reports received by NSW Public Health Units and recorded on the NSW Notifiable Conditions Information Management System (NCIMS) in the relevant period.
- Data cells in the 'Adverse Event Following Immunisation' category refer to suspected cases only. These reports are referred to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for assessment. Data on adverse events following immunisation is available online from the TGA [Database of Adverse Event Notifications](#).
- Only conditions for which at least one case report was received appear in the table. HIV and other blood-borne virus case reports are not included here but are available from the Infectious Diseases Data webpage.

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