

Zoonotic Outbreaks

A Zoonotic Disease Outbreak (ZDO) occurs when two or more persons experience a similar illness after exposure to the same animal or the same or similar species of animals. Epidemiologic evidence must implicate animals as the probable source of the illness.

DISEASE IN ANIMALS

Zoonotic disease outbreaks are caused by many different microorganisms, fungus and parasites. In Ohio, diseases most commonly associated with zoonotic disease outbreaks include Salmonella (reptiles, poultry), Campylobacter (cattle) Histoplasmosis and Toxoplasmosis. These are usually foodborne, but sometimes outbreaks are associated with food-producing animals, products, pets or pet foods.

Reporting: Many zoonotic disease agents are commonly found in animals. Unless listed as individually reportable, most are not routinely required to be reported to the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA). Voluntary reporting to ODA and to the [local health department](#) (LHD) is encouraged when animals with the disease are highly likely to put groups of humans at risk, especially in public settings such as petting zoos or schools.

Diagnostics: Necropsy and other diagnostic testing are available at the ODA Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. Call (614) 728-6220 or (800) 300-0755 for assistance.

DISEASE IN HUMANS

Reporting: Report by the end of the next business day to the local public health department where the patient resides. If patient residence is unknown, report to the local public health department in which the reporting health care provider or laboratory is located. If the outbreak, unusual incident or epidemic has an unexpected pattern of cases, suspected cases, deaths, or increased incidence of disease that is a major public health concern, then such outbreak, unusual incident, or epidemic shall be reported immediately via telephone.

In addition, voluntary reporting to ODA is encouraged when humans may have been infected by, or may transmit the infection to food producing animals via occupational or recreational exposure.

Human illness: Variable

Personal protection: When dealing with zoonotic disease agents, personal protection should be a first priority for the veterinarian and all animal handlers. Vector, contact, and droplet precautions should be taken when handling ill and dead animals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[ODH Infectious Disease Control Manual](#) (Section 3; Outbreaks)

[USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Animal Diseases](#)

[Iowa State University Center for Food Security and Public Health: Zoonoses Resources](#)

[Iowa State University Center for Food Security and Public Health Animal Disease Factsheets](#)

[Compendium of Veterinary Standard Precautions for Zoonotic Disease Prevention](#)