

NOVEMBER 2016

CATAWBA
COUNTY Public
Health

PUBLIC Health

MONTHLY UPDATE

**Feed
family,
friends
safely**

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**Flu activity
remains low**

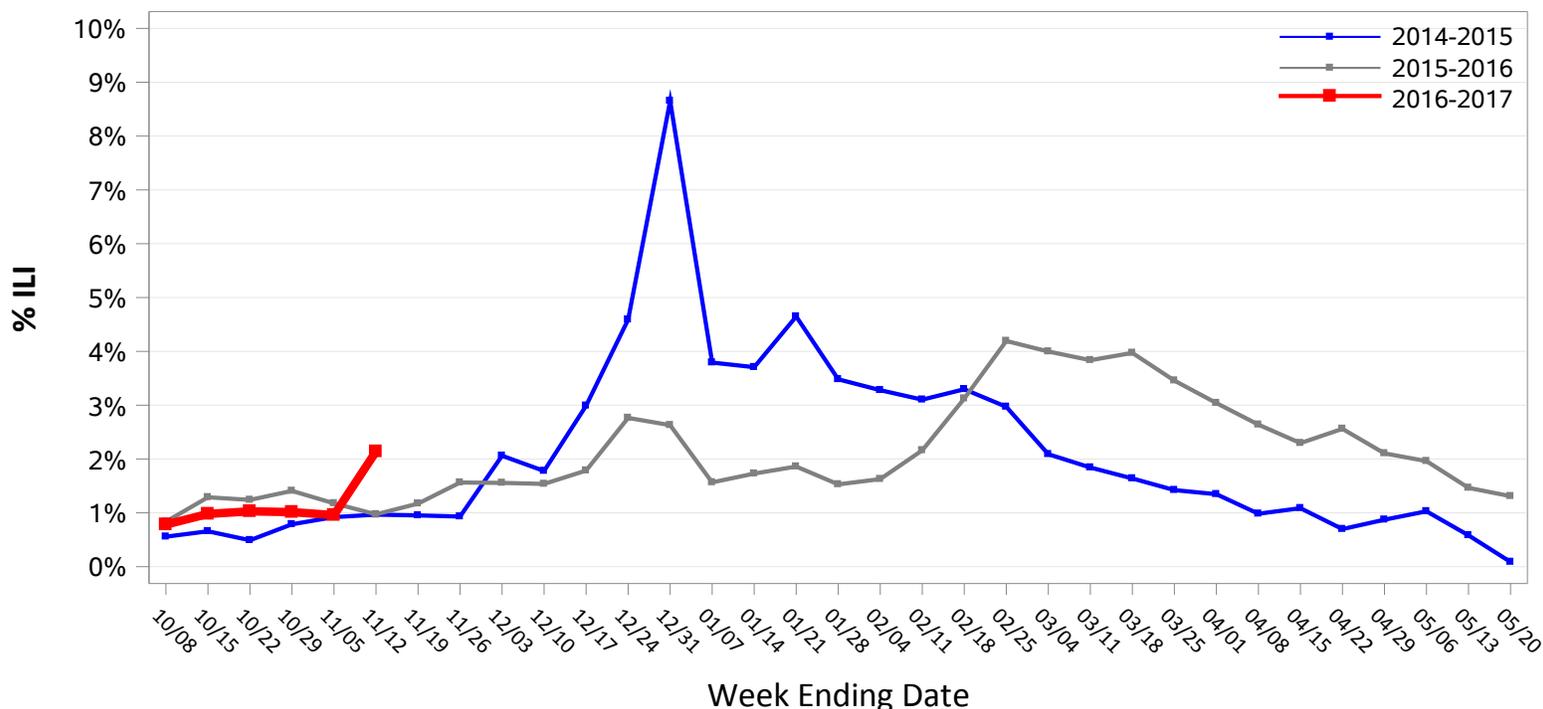
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Read more about
what we're doing
online



Flu activity remains low in N.C.

INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE, NC 2014-2017
Influenza-Like Illness in ILINET Outpatient Visits



2

**flu deaths in North Carolina
this season**

Of the two flu deaths in North Carolina this year, one was in the 18-24 age group. The other was in the 65+ age group, which is typically considered a vulnerable group.

59

last season in N.C.

MONTHLY NOTES

On the state, regional and national levels, flu cases are still only being reported sporadically and locally in some states. Influenza accounts for less than 2% of outpatient visits for illness in North Carolina and nationwide. The region around Catawba County and the counties to our west have the lowest flu incidence in the state.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the most common flu type currently present in the southeastern United States is the A (H3) strain.

FLUVIEW

A Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report Prepared by the Influenza Division
 Weekly Influenza Activity Estimates Reported by State and Territorial Epidemiologists*
 Week Ending November 19, 2016- Week 46



District of Columbia

- No Report
- No Activity
- Local
- Regional
- Widespread

MORE INFORMATION ONLINE

N.C. flu trends: <http://flu.nc.gov/>
 Flu patterns in the U.S.: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity_surv.htm





GRANT SUPPORT

State, federal and private grants help advance the mission of Catawba County Public Health.



Catawba County Public Health received \$3,028,827 in grant support for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Those funds will help us serve individuals and our community as a whole.

2016-2017 Grant Funding

FEDERAL

Bioterrorism	\$40,965
Salary support, coordination activities, educational materials	
Ebola	\$5,000
Preparedness activities and equipment	
STD Prevention	\$579
Educational materials	
Immunizations.....	\$14,123
Salary support for immunization clinical services	
Maternal Health (Low Risk)	\$32,124
Prenatal care for non-Medicaid low-risk clients	
Title X (Family Planning).....	\$45,933
Salary support, clinical services support	
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ...	\$19,732
Pregnancy prevention education, incentives and birth control	
Women's Health Supplement Funds	\$15,365
Long-term birth control methods	
Women, Infants and Children (WIC)	\$822,899
Long-term birth control methods	

TOTAL: \$996,720

FEDERAL/STATE

Care Coordination for Children	\$2,190
Case management of non-Medicaid children	
Child Health	\$88,656
School nurse support	
Tuberculosis.....	\$24,976
Salary support, supplies, client medications, travel expenses	
Breast and Cervical Cancer Control	\$58,560
Education, prevention and diagnosis of breast and cervical cancers	
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Children	\$10,922
Family Planning program support	

TOTAL: \$185,304

STATE

Child Fatality Prevention Team	\$1,257
Administrative support for quarterly board meetings	
Aid to County	\$102,710
Administrative support for public health operations	
School Nurse Initiative	\$200,000
Support for positions at Hickory and Catawba County schools	
STD Drugs	\$28,229
Medications to treat sexually transmitted diseases	
Communicable Disease.....	\$20,697
Salary support	
Healthy Communities	\$26,707
Salary support	
Maternal Health (High Risk)	\$75,869
Prenatal care for non-Medicaid high-risk clients	
Family Planning	\$1,868
Salary support	

TOTAL: \$457,337

OTHER

Food and Drug Administration.....	\$2,500
Operations for Environmental Health	
Smart Start/Early Childhood Support Team ..	\$158,824
Nursing support to area childcare centers	
Duke Endowment	\$150,000
Healthy community initiatives	
Catawba Valley Medical Center	\$1,000,000
School nurse support	
American Lung Association.....	\$1,800
Tuberculosis travel costs	
Environmental Health	\$52,342
Operation of food & lodging section, summer food inspections	
Ann Wolfe.....	\$8,000
Tobacco cessation for maternal health clients	
Susan G. Komen	\$16,000
Surgical follow-up for clients diagnosed with breast cancer	

TOTAL: \$1,389,466

Family, friends & food

Getting food from producer to table can take many steps today, from farm production to slaughtering or harvesting, storing, transporting and distributing – all before the food reaches the store or farmer's market. From there, food must be purchased and taken to the customer's home, where preparation, serving and sometimes reheating can take place. With all these steps, there are many opportunities for food contamination to take place.

In Catawba County, Environmental Health inspectors help ensure that opportunities for contamination are held to a minimum at meat markets, restaurants and more.

Although there are so many steps along the way where things can go awry, the United States' food supply is one of the safest in the world, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. However, there are still cases of what we call "food poisoning" every day. When certain disease-causing pathogens contaminate food, they can cause foodborne illness – roughly 48 million cases – the equivalent of sickening one in six Americans each year. These illnesses result in an estimated 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths a year in the U.S.

While most cases will clear up in a few days on their own, some foodborne illnesses can be serious — or even fatal. Anyone, of any age or health condition, could get very sick or die from these bacteria. This is especially true for people with weak immune systems, children, and the elderly. Pregnant women also need to be especially careful since some bacteria are very harmful or deadly to unborn babies.

Because foodborne illness can affect anyone, it's important for everyone to practice safe food handling behaviors to help reduce your risk of accidentally getting sick from contaminated food. When serving a crowd, a large number of people can get sick quickly from just one contaminated dish – a miserable way to spend a holiday.

Consumers expect food that they buy in supermarkets to be germ free. However, 100 percent of the microorganisms present in food can't be killed before being sold. When you shop, buy perishable foods last, take food straight home to the refrigerator, and don't buy anything you won't use before the use-by date.

After getting holiday dish ingredients home, consumers can follow four rules of thumb from the Food and Drug Administration and Food Insight.

CLEAN: Wash hands before and after food prep, and clean cutting boards, surfaces and utensils between uses with hot, soapy water. Always use clean platters for serving. Don't reuse one that held raw food or mari-

nade without washing it first. Use paper towels to clean up. Cloth towels and sponges can be havens for germs. Rinse and scrub fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water. Remember to clean lids on canned goods before opening.

SEPARATE: Separate raw meats, poultry and seafood in your shopping cart and the refrigerator to prevent cross contamination. If possible, use separate cutting boards: one for fruits and vegetables, one for raw meats. Use clean dishes and utensils to serve food, not those used in preparation. Need to restock? Don't add new food to an already-filled serving dish. Instead, replace nearly-empty serving dishes with freshly-filled ones. During the course of a party, bacteria from people's hands can contaminate the food. Plus, bacteria can multiply at room temperature.

COOK: Heating foods to the right temperature for the proper amount of time kills harmful bacteria, so cook meat, poultry, fish, and eggs thoroughly. Use a food thermometer to be sure, and use a safe food temperature list. If making sauces or gravy using meat juices, be sure to bring it to a boil before serving.

Are you cooking with the microwave? Cover the dish with a lid or plastic wrap to allow steam to build in the product. Use a food thermometer to read temperatures at different locations in the product. Arrange food evenly to ensure uniform cooking. Stir or rotate foods to eliminate spots that remain cold. Observe the "standing time" recommended on food packages. Cooking continues and is completed during this time.

CHILL: Refrigerate all perishables (foods that can spoil or become contaminated by bacteria if unrefrigerated) up until party time. Discard any perishable foods that were left at room temperature for more than two hours. Thaw food in the refrigerator or microwave, not on the kitchen counter; marinate in the refrigerator. Keep cold foods refrigerated until serving time.

Are you sending leftovers home or saving some for yourself? Refrigerate them within two hours of being served. Make sure they are placed in small, shallow containers for quick cooling in the fridge. Refrigerate foods quickly. The cold temperatures in refrigeration slow the growth of harmful bacteria. Do not over-stuff the refrigerator. Cold air must circulate to help keep food safe.

After your holiday event, don't eat foods that have been kept in the refrigerator for more than a few days. Never taste food that looks or smells strange to see if you can still use it. When in doubt, always throw it out.

Although we can't control everything that happens from farm to table, we can take steps to ensure our food is safe to eat. Hopefully, these tips will help keep you and your loved ones free of food poisoning this holiday season.



For more information on proper cooking temperatures and holding temperatures for buffet-style gatherings, go to <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/FoodborneIllnessContaminants/UCM257049.pdf>.

PUBLIC HEALTH HAPPENINGS



Donations from the Foods for Fines program at Catawba County and Hickory City libraries help Catawba County Public Health clients in need.

Donations aid emergency pantry

We want to say a public thank you to the Foods for Fines program at Catawba County and Hickory public libraries. We are blessed to receive a portion of the donated foods, which help stock our emergency pantry.

Radon action month set for Jan.

National Radon Action Month is set for January 2017. Team members are preparing for distribution of free radon test kits for residents of Catawba County. Exposure to radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer. The gas is colorless, odorless and can not be tasted, which makes it a silent risk. The only way to know if there is radon in a home is to test.



A retirement ceremony was held for Martha Knox on November 29.

Martha Knox retires

Longtime Catawba County Public Health employee Martha Knox is retiring as an Administrative Assistant III. Catawba County and Public Health staff wished her well in her retirement during a ceremony on November 29.

Annual Report released to public



The 2015-2016 Annual Report was released the last week of November, and details the accomplishments of Catawba County Public Health and its partners.

Work on SOTCH report begins

The State of the County Health Report is due in March 2017. Planning has begun for content, design and dissemination of the report, which documents the county's health and efforts made toward improving health based on the three priority areas set in the Community Health Assessment of 2015. Those priorities are physical activity, nutrition and chronic disease.