



Bulletin No. 3
March 4, 1977
20,000 Children Immunized

During the past three months, over 20,000 children have received over 45,000 doses of vaccine. On the morning of March 1, over 7,000 children who were not fully immunized were excluded from school. By the end of the day, less than 3,100 had not turned in proof of immunization status. The number of children still not fully up-to-date continues to drop each day and we expect that shortly all children will be back in school. A sampling from school districts around the state is listed below.

School District	Total Enrollment	March 1, 1977# Excluded a.m.	March 1, 1977# Excluded p.m.
Anchorage	40,000	4,676	1,951
Fairbanks	12,000	1,275	542
Juneau	4,500	250	67
Mat-Su	3,500	60	35
Ketchikan	3,000	75	12
Glennallen	750	67	20
Kodiak	2,200	68	32
Valdez	1,000	135	35
Bethel	1,500	60	60

We can definitely say that the rapid response of the Fairbanks Health Center and the North Star District School System resulted in the effective containment of a major measles epidemic. Fifty eight cases have been confirmed; the last case of measles was diagnosed on February 11, 1977. A similar effect was seen in Anchorage and it appears that we have again eliminated the measles virus from the state. We must now direct our efforts to preschoolers to see that they are fully immunized so this situation does not arise in the future. **Hats off to everyone who worked so hard to make this program a success!!!**

Meningococcal Meningitis - More Cases - Keep on the Look-Out!!!

Five cases of meningococcal meningitis were reported in February with one fatality in a 2-year-old girl from Coffman Cove. Three of the five cases have been confirmed as Type A. The organism from the fatal case did not grow. The main stay of therapy for meningococcal meningitis is penicillin. Rifampin is the drug of choice to treat household contacts of cases. Notify the Medical Epidemiologist immediately if you suspect the diagnosis (272-7534).

Botulism In Juneau

The first outbreak of botulism in 1977 occurred in a 50-year-old Native woman in Juneau. The patient had prepared a jar of salmon eggs. Eighteen hours after eating them, she developed nausea, vomiting, incoordination, weakness, dry mouth and blurred vision. Epidemiologic investigation established that the patient was the only one to have eaten the eggs and was the only person who became ill. The patient was treated with trivalent botulism antitoxin. Tests done at CDC in Atlanta, Georgia, confirmed the presence of Type E botulism toxin in the patient's sera and in the implicated food, fermented salmon eggs. The patient is doing well. An alert physician at the Public Health Hospital in Juneau made the diagnosis very early which allowed for rapid investigation and treatment. Botulism is a serious disease which will continue to occur from food that is improperly prepared. We urge all health workers to keep the diagnosis of botulism in mind when patients present with gastrointestinal symptoms accompanied by neurological impairment, particularly if there is a history of consumption of Native foods shortly before onset of symptoms.

(Reported by Len Quallich, M.D., PHS, Juneau and David Barrett, M.D., PHS, Anchorage)