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Bulletin No. 18
October 14, 1974

Influenza Watch

So far no confirmed cases of influenza have occurred in Alaska. Several flu-like illnesses have been diagnosed as caused by Echo virus. Physicians suspecting influenza are urged to obtain viral studies so the diagnosis may be confirmed. Information for viral studies may be obtained by contacting the Regional Medical Officers:

Northern Region – Paul Frith, D.V.M. – Fairbanks – 452-1592
Southcentral Region – Elizabeth Tower, M.D. – Anchorage – 274-1715
Southeastern Region – Margaret Bixby, RNS – Juneau – 586-1120

or by contacting the Medical Epidemiologist, Mickey Eisenberg, M.D. – Anchorage – 272-7534.

(Reported by the State Virology-Rabies Laboratory, Fairbanks.)

Diseases at a Glance

In the preceding two-week period, various diseases have been reported on the Rapid Telephonic Reporting System.

Most prominent has been gonorrhea, continuing at epidemic proportions throughout the State.

A smaller cluster of chickenpox has been reported from Anchorage and cases of hepatitis have been reported from Kivalina and Kotzebue.

A Request

A paper is being prepared regarding Alaska's greatest yellowjacket wasp outbreak in at least 25 years. In addition to biological information, it is desired to present information regarding the distribution and number of individuals requiring medical treatment for stings. Any physician treating any patients for wasp stings this year is asked to report the following information: Number of patients treated, number of patients treated which had severe enough reaction to suggest hospitalization and/or desensitization. If known, the location where sting occurred, such as in a car, near nest site, (i.e. underground nest, nest in tree or nest on top of ground). When published, this information will be available to all contributors or other interested persons. Please send any wasp sting information to:

Dr. Richard H. Washburn, Research Entomologist
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service
Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Box AE
Palmer, Alaska 99645 Phone: 745-3257