

## **Allegan County Communicable Disease – 2017**

Communicable diseases are those which can be easily transmitted from one person to another. Prevention and control of communicable disease is a necessary and critical aspect of assuring community health and is a duty of the local health department. The communicable disease section of the Allegan County Health Department is responsible for the keeping track of the over 80 reportable communicable diseases.

The list of reportable diseases, along with details on how to report to the local health department, can be found in the [Health Care Professionals Guide to Disease Reporting in Michigan](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Reportable_Diseases_by_Condition_478488_7.pdf).  
[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Reportable\\_Diseases\\_by\\_Condition\\_478488\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Reportable_Diseases_by_Condition_478488_7.pdf)

The Michigan Disease Surveillance System (MDSS) is a web-based communicable disease reporting system that facilitates coordination among local, state and federal public health agencies during follow-up investigations of communicable disease events. Data presented in the 2017 Communicable Disease Report were obtained from MDSS.

The Communicable Disease Report is a listing of new cases of reportable communicable diseases that have been reported to the Allegan County Health Department during the previous month. Cumulative case totals to-date is included as well as 3 previous years data for comparison. These statistics are updated monthly. Communicable disease reporting is an ongoing process and case information changes, often day to day or week to week. Case totals are subject to change as additional information and test results become available. Also included is a five-year report, comparing reported and probable cases.

Foodborne Illness/Gastrointestinal Illness- Most foodborne illnesses peak in the summer and decrease during the winter. The high incidence of foodborne illness during summer can be attributed to warmer weather and poor food handling during outdoor activities. Allegan County saw increases in the number of cases of Campylobacter and Salmonellosis in 2017, compared to the 5-year average, but a decrease in Shigellosis. Since the summer of 2016, Michigan has been experiencing a large Hepatitis A outbreak. Allegan County had one case of Hepatitis A reported in 2017. Hepatitis A can be prevented by proper hand washing and vaccination.

Influenza- In 2017 there was an increase in individual cases of influenza. This increase may be due to increased activity and/or reporting for the 2016-2017 influenza season. Influenza A H3N2 was the predominant strain and influenza activity peaked in February. (Remember to get your flu shot every year!)

Sexually Transmitted Infections – Chlamydia is the most common sexually-transmitted infection in Allegan County, Michigan, and the United States. Cases of chlamydia and gonorrhea increased in 2017, compared to the 5-year average. The increase was also noticed statewide. Individuals who have unprotected sex, multiple sex partners, and sexual intercourse with an infected person are at high-risk for infection. Avoiding high-risk behavior and practicing protected sex with the use of condoms can prevent infection.

Vector borne – Lyme disease cases were up in 2017 in Allegan County, compared to the 5-year average. Mosquito and tick-borne disease prevention largely depends on individual protection. Taking precautions to prevent mosquito and tick bites when engaging in outdoor activities can reduce the likelihood of getting vector borne infections.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases –Surveillance of vaccine-preventable diseases not only informs the effectiveness of immunization programs and vaccines, but also allows monitoring progress towards preventable disease elimination. Allegan County has had zero cases of mumps from . Michigan had 33 cases in 2017. Pertussis is a very contagious disease, spread from person to person, usually by coughing or sneezing. Allegan County's pertussis cases were down in 2017, compared to the 5-year average. The best way to prevent pertussis is to get vaccinated.