



EID Updates:

Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases, Region of the Americas

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Notice: As of summer 2004, these updates will be published whenever communicable-disease events of importance for international public health are identified, and not on a weekly basis. For this reason, the name has been changed from *EID Weekly Updates* to ***EID Updates***.

Outbreak of Aseptic Meningitis in Puerto Rico

On 16 July 2004, the Department of Health of Puerto Rico confirmed the existence of an outbreak of aseptic meningitis in the southern part of Puerto Rico. A total of 17 cases have been reported in the areas of Patillas, Arroyo, Santa Isabel, Salinas, and Guayama. Laboratory tests confirm that all the cases investigated correspond to aseptic meningitis.

It is estimated that the outbreak began in the south at the end of June and then spread to 6 of the 8 regions. The new regions with confirmed cases were Arecibo, Fajardo, Caguas, Bayamón, and Aguadilla. In the metropolitan area, several cases were reported that are currently under evaluation.

Up to Epidemiological Week (EW) 30 (25–31 July 2004) 118 cases had been recorded. The data confirm the trend towards control of the outbreak. No deaths or unfavorable clinical developments have been reported in any of the patients, which—according to the Department of Health—confirms the benign nature of this outbreak.

On 2 August 2004, the Secretary of Health, Dr. Johnny Rullán, reported that the results of the samples sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States (CDC) in Atlanta confirmed that the cause of the outbreak of aseptic meningitis affecting the island since mid-June is Echovirus 30.

The main focus of the interventions to control the outbreak has been placed on general measures for prevention and basic hygiene, in addition to an active surveillance system for following up on the magnitude and geographical extension of the outbreak and taking specific control measures.

Source: Department of Health of Puerto Rico.

Outbreak of Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* of Local Origin, Uruguay

From 1 January to 28 July 2004, there have been reports from Montevideo on a strain of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* of community origin that has affected 417 people, among which 80% were topical infections where the patients were treated on an ambulatory basis. For the same period, four deaths have been reported.

Two major outbreaks have occurred, the first in the Casabó district at the end of February, where methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* was documented in the community, and the second in the Santin Carlos Rossi psychiatric facility at the beginning of July. Both outbreaks are under control.

Since October 2002, the Ministry of Health has instituted a series of measures aimed at prevention, surveillance, detection, investigation and intervention of emerging antimicrobial resistance, targeted at both health workers and the community, through the Epidemiological Surveillance Area and the Department of Public Health Laboratory. As a result of this new outbreak, the Ministry of Health has issued materials to orient the medical community on specific prevention and treatment measures.

Source: Ministry of Health of Uruguay.