

PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION



Communicable Diseases

The Role of Public Health

Public health has long focused on preventing and treating sickness. Perhaps the most notable story in public health history is that of John Snow, an English doctor who investigated the terrible outbreak of cholera (severe diarrhea) of 1854. Despite everyone's best efforts to stop it, the disease swept through the community, causing severe illness and death. Dr. Snow found that the source of the illness was a contaminated water well. Right away he removed the pump handle, ending the outbreak. Thankfully our modern sanitation and water systems make cholera a problem of the past, but public health still investigates and acts on sicknesses that may threaten our community's health. Scott County Health Department (SCHD) does this through our communicable disease program.

The term "communicable disease" refers to illness caused by tiny germs passed from one person (or contaminated item) to another person. The germs can be bacteria, viruses, protozoans or fungi which enter the body where they grow, multiply, and cause the person to become sick.

Some diseases have been around for a long time, like whooping cough (pertussis), mumps, and some sexually transmitted diseases. Other diseases, like Zika or Ebola, create new or emerging threats to the health of communities. Of the communicable diseases, only some are required by law to be reported. SCHD receives disease reports for the Scott County area and is responsible for following up with people that are affected or exposed.

Take Action to Stay Healthy

You can prevent illness by taking some simple actions! Many diseases can be prevented with vaccines. Talk to your doctor to learn which vaccines may benefit you. Good sanitation helps prevent the spread of germs. Simple hand washing and staying home when you are sick can do wonders to control the spread of diseases. If you do become ill, visit your doctor and follow through with the doctor's order, like taking medicine.

To learn more about our communicable disease program, visit:

<http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/communicable-disease>



OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department promotes, protects, and preserves health through leadership, services, education, and partnerships.

OUR VISION:

Scott County—
A safe and healthy
community.



SPECIAL EVENTS

- *Scott County Board of Health Meeting, Scott County Administrative Center, 1st Floor Boardroom, 12:00 PM, Thursday, December 15, 2016.*
- *Scott County Health Department will be closed Friday December 23rd and Monday December 26th in observance of the Christmas holiday.*

Links

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

<http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/>

Henry the Hand: Handwashing Awareness Week:

<http://www.henrythehand.com/news-events/national-handwashing-awareness-week/>

Communicable Disease Program:

<http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/communicable-disease>

CDC: John Snow and the Pump Handle:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5334a1.htm>

Iowa Department of Public Health Reportable Diseases:

<https://idph.iowa.gov/CADE/reportable-diseases>

National Handwashing Awareness Week

National Hand Washing Awareness Week is December 4th through 10th! It is a time to remind everyone that washing hands with soap and water is one of the most effective ways to avoid an illness. The best part is that handwashing is quick and simple! By following the five steps below from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, you can prevent the spread of germs between you and your loved ones.



1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water.
2. Apply the soap and **lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap.
3. **Scrub** the top and bottoms of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails for at least 20 seconds or by singing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
4. After scrubbing your hands, **rinse** well with clean, running water.
5. Then, **dry** your hands using a clean towel.

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