



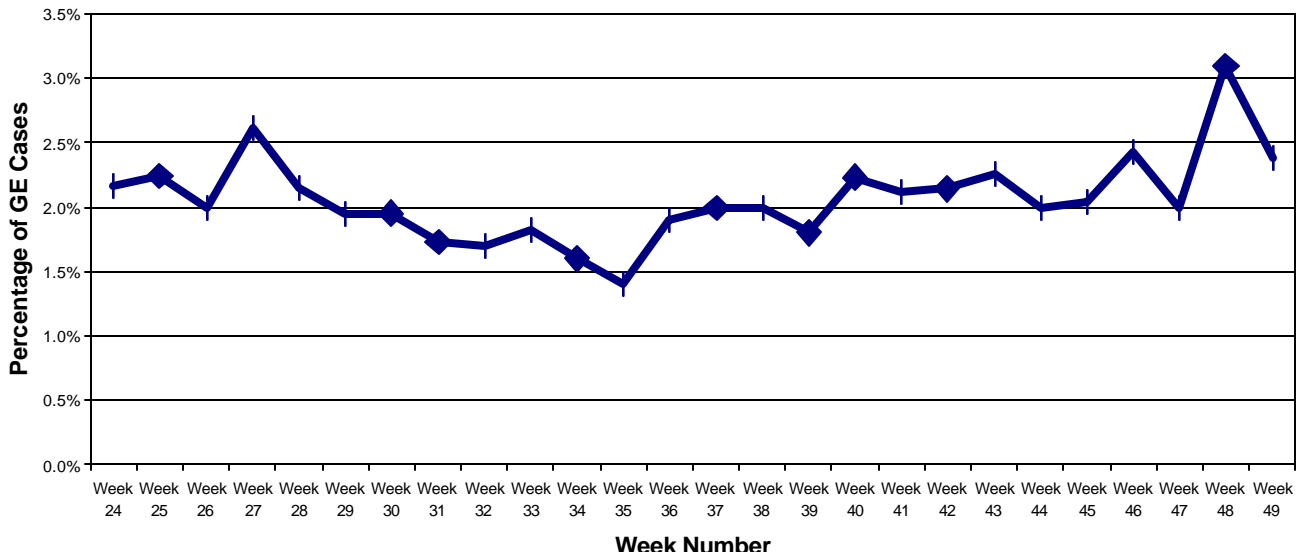
**Office of Epidemiology  
Gastroenteritis Surveillance Program**

**Date:** December 19, 2000  
**To:** Health Care Providers  
**From:** Patricia Rowley  
**Subject:** Report for week ending December 9, 2000 (Week 49).

The Clark County Health District (CCHD) Gastroenteritis Surveillance Program began data collection on May 15, 2000 (week 20). This is an ongoing program and is open to new participants. Health care providers wishing to participate as sentinel sites for the surveillance program should contact Patricia Rowley, Surveillance Coordinator, at (702) 383-1378.

An average of 28 sentinel sites reported during weeks 45 through 49 (November 5- December 8). A total of 53,886 patients were seen during this 5-week period, averaging 10,777 per week. There were 1342 cases of gastroenteritis (GE) reported in the same time period, which is an average of 2.5%. Persons experiencing diarrhea or vomiting not explained by a chronic condition were counted as cases. Figure 1 shows the weekly percentage of GE cases in Clark County since inception of the program.

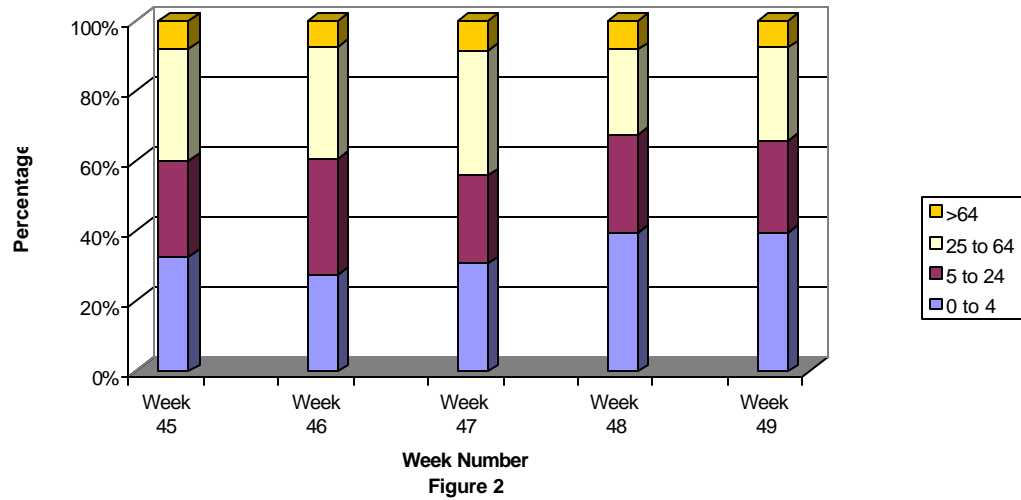
**GE Occurrence, Clark County Weeks 20-49**



**Figure 1**

In week 48, there was an increase of approximately 0.75% (over the average) in the proportion of GE cases seen in Clark County. This coincided with an increase in proportion of cases in the 0 to 4-year old age group (Figure 2) and a fourfold increase in the number of reported rotavirus cases (as compared with the previous 4 weeks).

Proportion of GE cases by Age Group, Clark County, Weeks 45-49



There is a higher number of laboratory confirmed cases of campylobacteriosis, shigellosis and giardiasis in Clark County this year as compared to the same period last year (Table 1). Frequently, when a case of *Shigella* or *Giardia* is identified, there are other infected household members. Additional cases can be found by testing household contacts. Although *Shigella* infections are most often self-limiting and do not require antibiotic treatment, giardiasis can persist for extended periods without anti-parasitic treatment.

Table 1: Enteric Illnesses, Clark County, 1999 and 2000

Disease	Year to Date	
	1999	2000
Campylobacteriosis	65	100
Giardiasis	108	140
Shigellosis	47	102

Attached to this issue of the Gastroenteritis Surveillance Report is an Epidemiology Newsletter on Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC). Evidence is mounting that these non-reportable infections represent a public health threat.

If you have any questions regarding the gastroenteritis surveillance program, please call Patricia Rowley at (702) 383-1378. Patients with a suspected foodborne illness should be referred to the Clark County Health District, Office of Epidemiology to report the illness. The Office of Epidemiology can be reached Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm. After hours and weekends, call (702) 385-1291.