



**DATE:** November 17, 2022

**TO:** Southern Nevada District Board of Health Members

**FROM:** Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH, District Health Officer *FL*

**SUBJECT:** District Health Officer Report

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**Naegleria fowleri**

On October 19, the Southern Nevada Health District announced the death of a Clark County resident from an infection of *Naegleria fowleri*, also known as a brain-eating amoeba. The patient was a male, under the age of 18. Based on the Health District's investigation, the individual may have been exposed in the Kingman Wash area of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. This is the first confirmed fatality reported from *Naegleria fowleri* exposure at Lake Mead.

*Naegleria fowleri* is commonly found in bodies of warm freshwater, such as lakes and rivers, and geothermal water, such as hot springs. The amoeba infects people by entering the body through the nose and traveling to the brain. It cannot infect people if swallowed and is not spread from person to person. The infection is extremely rare, and almost always fatal.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notified the Health District that *Naegleria fowleri* was confirmed as the cause of the patient's illness. Infection with the amoeba causes primary amebic meningoencephalitis (PAM), a brain infection that initially includes headache, fever, nausea, or vomiting and progresses to stiff neck, seizures and coma that can lead to death. Symptoms usually begin about five days after infection but can start within 1 to 12 days. Once symptoms start, the disease progresses rapidly and usually causes death within about five days.

The amoeba is naturally occurring, and there is no routine test for *Naegleria fowleri*. Previous water testing has shown that it is regularly found in freshwater bodies and though the risk is low, recreational water users should always assume there is a risk when they enter warm fresh water. The National Park Service, working with the NPS Office of Public Health, made the decision to continue to allow recreational swimming at Lake Mead as the organism does exist naturally and is commonly found in the environment. Recommended precautions from the CDC include:

- Avoid jumping or diving into bodies of warm freshwater, especially during the summer.
- Hold your nose shut, use nose clips, or keep your head above water when in bodies of warm fresh water.
- Avoid putting your head underwater in hot springs and other untreated geothermal waters.
- Avoid digging in, or stirring up, the sediment in shallow warm fresh water.

More information about *Naegleria fowleri* is available at [www.cdc.gov/parasites/naegleria/general.html](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/naegleria/general.html).

## **Monkeypox**

On October 20, the Health District reported the first death of a Clark County resident diagnosed with monkeypox. The patient was a male over the age of 50 with underlying medical conditions whose death was attributed to other causes.

The Health District is continuing to remind the public that anyone can get monkeypox; however, people who are immunocompromised are at greater risk for serious illness and complications if infected with the virus. People can protect themselves from monkeypox by avoiding close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have monkeypox, contact with objects and materials that a person with monkeypox has used, and washing their hands often. Vaccination remains an important tool for preventing the spread of monkeypox. The JYNNEOS vaccine is a two-dose series and is available through the Health District. It is important for those who have received their first dose of the vaccine to return for the second dose to ensure they get the best protection, not just partial protection, against the virus. Clinic information is available at [www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/Health-Topics/monkeypox/monkeypox-vaccine-clinics/](http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/Health-Topics/monkeypox/monkeypox-vaccine-clinics/).

TPOXX (the antiviral drug tecovirimat) is available to treat people who are more at risk for severe illness from monkeypox. A health care provider may provide TPOXX for people who are immunocompromised; have severe monkeypox disease; who are children, particularly those under 8 years old; with active conditions that affect the skin; or who are pregnant or breastfeeding. More information is available at [www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/if-sick/treatment.html](http://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/if-sick/treatment.html).

The number of reported monkeypox cases in Clark County continues to decline. As of November 1, the Health District is reporting 275 probable and confirmed cases in Clark County. Updated information about cases and doses of vaccine administered is available on the Health District website at [www.snhd.info/monkeypox](http://www.snhd.info/monkeypox). Additional prevention information is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at [www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/prevention/protect-yourself.html](http://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/prevention/protect-yourself.html).

## **National Latino AIDS Awareness Day**

The Health District and Southern Nevada Health Consortium worked together to help stop HIV stigma and address the disproportionate impact of HIV on Hispanic/Latino communities during this year's National Latino AIDS Awareness Day on October 15, 2022.

The organizations participated in an event at 4884 E. Lake Mead Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89115 that offered rapid HIV testing, monkeypox vaccines, COVID-19 vaccines, and other community services for attendees. There was live music, entertainment and guest speakers that addressed HIV and its impact on the Latino community. Information was provided in English and Spanish. HIV testing was offered by the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, and the Health District was on site with PrEP navigators discussing PEP (post-exposure) and PrEP (pre-exposure) services, sexually transmitted diseases and condom distribution.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were 34,800 estimated new HIV infections in the U.S. in 2019. Of the new infections, 29 percent (10,200) were among Hispanic/Latino people. The root causes driving inequities among Hispanic/Latino people include, but are not limited to, social and structural issues such as racism, HIV stigma, homophobia, poverty and limited access to high-quality health care. More information is available on the CDC's [HIV and Hispanic/Latino People website](#).

National Latino AIDS Awareness Day is an opportunity to raise awareness and encourage the Latino community to get tested, know their status and gain knowledge about the prevention services that are available to them. This year's event was supported by Southern Nevada Healthcare Consortium members and Anthem Medicaid was a presenting sponsor. Committee members include Alto Pharmacy; Southern Nevada Health District; CPLC Nevada; Community Counseling Center; Henderson Equality Center; Nevada Legal Services; Dignity Health; The Center; AHF Pharmacy; and AHF Testing program.

### **American Diabetes Month**

The Health District is spotlighting one of the most prevalent diseases in the United States during American Diabetes Month. More than 37 million Americans have diabetes, the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S. and the primary cause of kidney failure, lower limb amputations and blindness. People with diabetes are also at a higher risk of developing more serious complications from flu and COVID-19.

Approximately 254,000 people in Nevada have diagnosed diabetes. It's estimated that an additional 70,000 people have the disease, but don't know it, thus increasing their health risks. Approximately 18,550 Nevada residents are diagnosed with diabetes every year. American Diabetes Month is sponsored nationally by the American Diabetes Association every November. The campaign aims to remind people who are living with diabetes, as well as those at risk of developing it, that there are options available to protect their health. The theme of this year's campaign is: "Today's Diabetes Hits Different." The ADA notes that today's diabetes has different risk factors and complications than existed in previous years. Today, however, there are different ways to "hit back." These include new technologies and better resources.

Throughout the year, the Southern Nevada Health District's Office of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion offers free resources, diabetes self-management classes, and a six-session Road to Diabetes Prevention program. Programs and resources are free and available in English and Spanish. They can be accessed on the [Get Healthy Clark County](#) and [Viva Saludable](#) websites or by calling (702) 759-1270.

The Health District offers free, year-round, diabetes self-management and education classes in English and Spanish. Virtual and in-person classes are available. To sign up to be on the waiting list and to be notified when diabetes self-management classes are scheduled, individuals can visit the [Get Healthy Clark County Diabetes Workshop Interest Form](#) or [Viva Saludable](#) websites.

Additionally, for those who attended the [Día de Muertos](#) (Day of the Dead) event at Springs Preserve on Sunday, November 6, screening surveys for prediabetes were offered at no charge.

Nationally, 96 million Americans have prediabetes, up from 88 million in 2019. About one in three Nevada adults has prediabetes with blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. The Health District offers the Road to Diabetes Prevention program, designed for people with prediabetes or who are at risk for diabetes. This free, online program is available in English and Spanish and teaches participants about risk factors and how to make simple lifestyle changes. Participants can sign up for the [Road to Diabetes Prevention](#) program on the [Get Healthy Clark County](#) or the [Viva Saludable's Programa de Prevención de Diabetes en línea](#) web pages.

Finally, the Nevada Diabetes Resource Directory provides information about classes, prevention, low-cost clinics, specialists, support groups and more. The information is presented in English and Spanish and is available on the [Get Healthy Clark County Diabetes](#) web page.

### **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

Updated COVID-19 boosters for children 5 years of age and older are available at Health District clinics. Moderna's updated (bivalent) COVID-19 booster is authorized for children 6-17 years old. Pfizer's updated (bivalent) booster has received authorization for children 5-11 years old. The Pfizer vaccine was previously authorized for use in people 12 years and older, and the Moderna vaccine was previously authorized for adults.

The updated COVID-19 boosters provide additional protection from the BA.4 and BA.5 lineages of the Omicron variant of the virus that are currently the dominant variants circulating in the community. Updated COVID-19 vaccine and testing locations are available at [www.snhd.info/covid](http://www.snhd.info/covid).

### **Community Meetings**

#### **Week ending 10/30:**

##### Monthly:

- Participated in the individual Southern Nevada District Board of Health Agenda Review meeting with Councilwoman Diaz, Councilwoman Dutkowski, Councilman Adams, Councilman Black, Councilman Knudsen, Councilwoman Romero, Scott Nielson, Bobbette Bond
- Participated in the Monthly DHHS/LHA Public Health Topics meeting
- Participated in the Southern Nevada District Board of Health meeting
- Participated in the Southern Nevada Community Health Center Governing Board meeting
- Participated in the Nevada Primary Care Association (NVPCA) Policy Committee meeting
- Participated in the BCHC Monthly Call: Presentation on BCHC/PI Operationalizing Racism as a PH Crisis Project

##### Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the "BPHC Telehealth PIN Office Hour" webinar facilitated by NACCHO

##### Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Participated in a meeting with Amelia Lane and Caleb Cage, from The Blueprint Collaborative, regarding DPBH's strategic plan
- Participated in a meeting with Dr. Erick Lopez and Dr. Cassius Lockett regarding services and SNHD employment opportunities

#### **Week ending 10/23:**

##### Weekly:

- Participated in the CDC COVID-19 All State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Update call

##### Monthly:

- Participated in the individual Southern Nevada District Board of Health Agenda Review meeting with Commissioner Kirkpatrick and Commissioner Segerblom

##### Bi-Monthly (every two months):

- Participated in a meeting with Bradley Mayer regarding a legislative update

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Proposed Rules” webinar facilitated by NACHC

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Participated in a meeting with Dr. Nadia Gomez, Interim Chair of OB/GYN, UNLV Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine regarding services
- Participated in an introductory meeting with K Rucker-Morrow and Marcie Rohleder from Huron Consulting
- Participated in a meeting with K Rucker Morrow, Huron Consulting, regarding the Nevada Primary Care Association

**Week ending 10/09:**

Quarterly:

- Attended the Public Health Advisory Board meeting

Media/Interviews/Panelist/Presenter:

- Speaker at the Roundtable with Latino Community Leaders and Senator Jacky Rosen

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “Responding to MPX at Local HIV/STI Programs: Leveraging Resources for a Syndemic Approach” facilitated by NACCHO
- Attended the “Societal Experts Action Network (SEAN) Fall 2022 Symposium” facilitated by the National Academies
- Attended the “Update on the Prevention and Treatment of Pediatric HIV Infection” webinar facilitated by IAS-USA

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Attended the SNCHC Nominations Committee meeting
- Participated in a meeting with Bradley Mayer regarding jurisdictional contributions
- Participated in a meeting with Councilman James Adams and City Manager Taylour Tedder regarding ARPA contributions
- Attended a meeting with Dr. Tyree Davis regarding Dental Services at the Fremont Public Health Center
- Participated in a meeting with Director Richard Whitley regarding Salesforce

**Week ending 10/02:**

Media/Interviews/Panelist/Presenter:

- Interview with Rocio Hernandez (Cafecito Nevada - The Nevada Independent) on the flu season and COVID-19 bivalent booster

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “HIV 101: Initiation of Antiretroviral Therapy and Primary Care for People with HIV” webinar facilitated by IAS-USA
- Attended the “Big Cities Health Inventory - Inequities, 2020 & New City Data” webinar facilitated by Big Cities Health Coalition
- Attended the “Raising the Bar: Models for Strategic Planning to Coordinate Equity Efforts” webinar

- Attended the “Creative Ways to Advance Your Career” webinar facilitated by HBS Online

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Participated in the virtual admissions cycle to review applicants for the Class of 2027 at the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine