

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.

**Rick Scott**

Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS

State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation**August 26, 2015****Health officials in Gulf County respond to cases of viral meningitis****Contact:**

Sarah Hinds

Sarah.Hinds@flhealth.gov

850-227-1276, ext. 205



Port St. Joe, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Gulf County (DOH-Gulf) is working with health care providers, parents and administrators to respond to cases of viral meningitis, caused by enterovirus, and other reports of illnesses in students enrolled at Port St. Joe Junior-Senior High School in Port St. Joe, Florida. Based on new case definition criteria, there are three confirmed laboratory cases of viral meningitis.

Viral meningitis is an infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord that is caused by a virus. In the summer months, most viral meningitis cases are caused by enteroviruses, which are most often spread from person to person through contact with infected person's fecal material or saliva. Symptoms of viral meningitis include fever, severe headache, stiff neck, sensitivity to bright light, sleepiness or trouble waking up, nausea, vomiting and lack of appetite. Symptoms usually last seven to 10 days and people with normal immune systems usually recover completely.

The symptoms of viral meningitis are similar to those of the more serious bacterial form of meningitis. Because of this it is important to see a health care provider right away if you think you or your child might have meningitis.

Below are steps you can take to help lower your chances of spreading viral meningitis:

- Wash your hands thoroughly and often with soap and water, especially after changing diapers, using the toilet, or coughing or blowing your nose;
- Avoid sharing a drinking glass, water bottles, eating utensils, lipstick or other such items that may have saliva on them;
- Avoid close contact, such as touching or shaking hands, with people who are sick;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces; and
- Staying home when you are sick. About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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Florida Department of Health

In GULF COUNTY

2475 Garrison Ave., Port St. Joe, FL 32456, Phone: 850-227-1276, Fax: 850-227-1794
807 Hwy 22, Wewahitchka, FL 32465, Phone: 850-639-2644, Fax: 850-639-2357

www.FloridasHealth.com

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