

Contact: Sue Fuller, Public Information Officer 815-720-4213

Date: July 24, 2013

For Immediate Release

Updated Case Count of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* Infections

Today the Winnebago County Health Department announces an updated case count of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* infections. Preliminary data indicates we have 12 laboratory confirmed cases and an additional 4 probable cases, with one facility being implicated at this time. Cases range in age from 13 to 49; all had ears pierced between 3/28/13 and 7/9/2013. Six patients were hospitalized and ten required surgical intervention as part of their treatment. Persons who developed infections reside in Winnebago, Boone, Ogle, Dekalb, and Stephenson Counties.

It is important to re-emphasize, individuals interested in body piercing should verify that the facility is registered with the State of Illinois. Make sure the person doing the piercing has washed their hands and is wearing gloves for the piercing procedure. Also, ensure the jewelry has been properly sterilized and free of scratches or irregular surfaces. Individuals should ask if the piercer follows the IDPH tattoo and body piercing guidelines. If you have recently had a piercing, make sure to keep the area dry and clean. Follow any instructions given to you for after care. Such instructions could include:

- Wash your hands prior to touching the piercing; do not touch except when cleaning.
- Stay healthy; the healthier your lifestyle, the easier it will be for your piercing to heal.
- Showers tend to be safer than taking baths, as bathtubs can harbor bacteria. If you bathe in a tub, clean it well before each use and rinse off the piercing when you get out.

Because this is an on-going epidemiological investigation, please contact the Winnebago County Health Department at (815) 720-4050 to report a recent history of ear piercing and symptoms at the site of the ear piercing. If a person has had an ear piercing and develops redness, swelling or pain following a piercing, especially of the upper ear, they should seek medical attention and should contact their local Health Department. There is still a concern that there may be other cases in the community that have not been reported or adequately treated.

People living in Boone County may contact the Boone County Health Department at 815-544-2951. People living in Ogle County may contact Ogle County Health Department at 815-732-7330. Individuals living in Stephenson County may contact the Stephenson County Health Department at (815) 599-8429. People in Dekalb County may contact the Dekalb County Health Department at 815-748-2463. For more information, go to www.wchd.org.

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Service Locations

401 Division St. Rockford, IL 61104-2014 (815)720-4000

555 North Court St. Rockford, IL 61103-6862 (815)720-4000

330 15th Avenue Rockford, IL 61104-5155 (815) 972-7200

Mailing address for all locations: 401 Division St. P.O. Box 4009 Rockford, IL 61110-0509

www.wchd.org