

EPI SCOPE

Florida
HEALTH

YOUR QUARTERLY DOSE OF DISEASE AWARENESS



ABOUT EPI SCOPE

Epi Scope is published by the Florida Department of Health in Seminole County, one of 67 county health departments in Florida that achieved statewide accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board. The Florida Department of Health works to protect, promote, and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, and community efforts.

The purpose of this newsletter is to relay epidemiological information, current events, health alerts, guidelines, and surveillance data to health care partners and the community. Reportable disease surveillance data that are included in this report are provisional as of the time the newsletter issue is published and is subject to change. For the latest reportable disease data, visit FLHealthCharts.gov.

If you have questions, contact DiseaseControlSeminole@FLHealth.gov. Do not send any confidential information by email.

Notifiable disease reporting should not be emailed. For required reporting, call 407-665-3243 (afterhours: 407-665-3000, option 1).

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Food Safety

Lindsey Wengenroth, MPH

Safe food practices are essential to keeping everyone healthy for the holidays. Follow these key tips while preparing meals at home to prevent illness.

Gastrointestinal illness (GI) can occur when food is not handled safely and may lead to symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. Germs like salmonella, campylobacter, and E. coli can be present in raw foods and can spread through cross contamination. These germs can cause illness if they are ingested.

Report instances of suspected food poisoning by phone to 407-665-3243 or online at [FLcors.com/FWSupport](https://flcors.com/FWSupport).

Safe Cooking Temperatures

Meat	Minimum Temperature
Whole cuts of beef, veal, lamb, and pork	145°F
Fish and shellfish	145°F
Ground beef and pork	160°F
Poultry	165°F
Leftovers and casseroles	165°F
Eggs	160°F

Helpful Tips

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap for approximately 20 seconds before touching any food and after handling any raw meat.
- Replace/disinfect kitchen towels and sponges regularly, as they can harbor germs and contribute to cross contamination.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables before eating.
- Thaw frozen meats in the refrigerator, under cold water, or in the microwave. Never thaw frozen meats on the counter.
- Do not wash raw meat. Washing does not remove germs; only cooking kills bacteria. Rinsing raw meat can spread harmful organisms to sinks, counters, and other foods.
- Avoid cross contamination by keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from ready-to-eat foods. Use separate cutting boards, plates, and utensils.
- Cook food to their recommended internal temperatures and check with a food thermometer.
- Keep refrigerators at or below 40° F and freezers at 0° F to prevent bacterial growth and maintain food safety.
- Refrigerate leftovers promptly and use within 3–4 days to reduce the risk of bacterial growth.
- Do not leave food out for more than 2 hours (1 hour if exposed to high temperatures).
- Store food in shallow containers in the refrigerator.



If you experience any severe GI symptoms such as diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea, or vomiting, seek care for testing and treatment.

Lead Poisoning

Madison Fausnaugh, MPH

Lead occurs naturally in the environment and can cause negative health effects when ingested or by the inhalation of lead dust. The level at which adverse effects occur has not been identified. Children under the age of 6 are most likely to be exposed from putting their hands and objects into their mouths.

Lead Exposures

Non-exhaustive list of known risk factors:

- Dust from lead-based paint, common in homes built before 1978
- Soil and air near airports
- Pipes, faucets, and other plumbing fixtures may contain lead, especially if made prior to 1986
- Certain candies and spices, particularly those imported from outside of the U.S.
- Some traditional medicines
- Cosmetic products
- Shooting ranges or firearms manufacturing
- Demolition of buildings and structures
- Welding, casting, or soldering
- Industrial mineral processing activities such as mining or smelting
- Home renovation, repair, remodeling or painting in structures built prior to 1978
- Eating non-food items

Check product recalls and remove these items from your home to minimize exposure.

Health Impacts

Lead impacts the brain, nervous system, and reproductive system. It can cause developmental delays, delayed growth, hearing and speech issues, difficulty learning or paying attention, serious illness, and death.

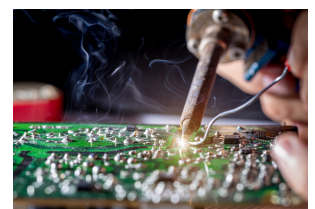
Check for Product Recalls at
CPSC.gov/Recalls

Read the EPA LEAD Standards

If someone in the home has a job or hobby with high lead exposure, they should utilize proper personal protective equipment while at work. Adults that work with lead should tell their health care providers and have their blood lead levels tested regularly.

Prevent taking home lead exposure:

- Wash hands often and shower at the end of the exposure
- Change clothes and shoes before going home
- Keep clothes exposed to lead separate and wash on their own

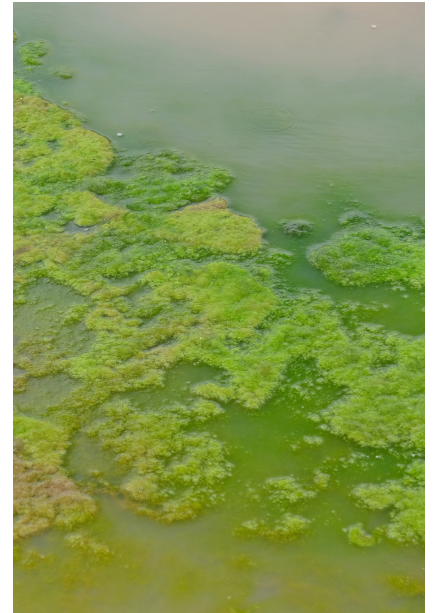


Harmful Algal Blooms

Meredith Bacci, MPH, a-IPC

Algae are plant-like organisms that live in bodies of water. They produce oxygen and contribute to the food chain in fresh water, salt water, and brackish environments.

In the summer and early fall in Florida when the weather is warm, certain type of algae can grow quickly and overpopulate the area they inhabit. Overgrowth of algae often looks like foam or scum-like masses, and move around with wind and current changes. Some types of algae release toxins as part of their growth cycle, and when those toxin-producing organisms experience overgrowth it is referred to as a harmful algal bloom (HAB).



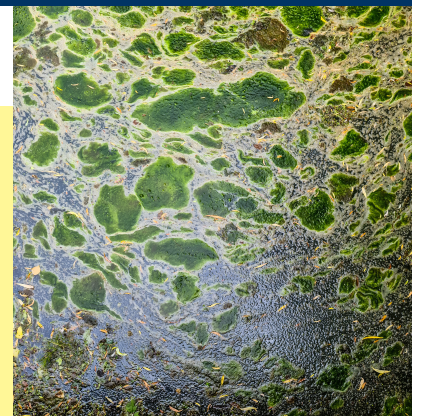
Harmful Algal Blooms are Important to Monitor



Toxins released by these algae can cause illness in people, pets, and wildlife. Symptoms after exposure can include, rash, stomach cramping, tingling of the tongue or lips, nausea, diarrhea, and vomiting. High levels of exposure can have detrimental effects on the liver and nervous system. Symptoms may appear in animals before humans.

What to do if a Harmful Algal Bloom is Near You

Do not wade, swim, or bathe in water experiencing an HAB. Do not allow pets or livestock to use water experiencing a HAB as a source of drinking water. Fish caught from water experiencing a HAB should be rinsed with running tap or bottled water, guts discarded, and fillets cooked well before consuming. Boiling the water will not eliminate the toxins. Shellfish should never be consumed from waters with an algal bloom, as shellfish are filter feeders and can concentrate toxins in their bodies.



The Florida Department of Health monitors harmful algal blooms through county environmental health offices.

Learn more at [ProtectingFloridaTogether.gov](https://www.floridatogether.gov)

If you think you are experiencing symptoms from, or have been exposed to, a harmful algal bloom, contact your health care provider or call Florida Poison Information Center at 800-222-1222.

Seminole County Surveillance Data July – September 2026

To review Seminole County's quarterly surveillance data, visit FLHealthCharts.gov and the Reportable Diseases Frequency Report on Seminole.FloridaHealth.gov.

Confirmed and probable cases of select notifiable diseases per Rule 64D-3, Florida Administrative Code.



Health Alerts and Advisories

View the latest health alerts and advisories at Seminole.FloridaHealth.gov/News.

For any questions regarding the content of these advisories and alerts, call 407-665-3243, option 1, or email DiseaseControlSeminole@FLHealth.gov.

Additional Resources

Florida Department of Health, Disease Reporting and Surveillance

[Florida Department of Health Arbovirus Reports](#)

Florida Department of Health in Seminole County

Data Sets: [Florida Health CHARTS \(FL CHARTS\)](#) • [Agency for Health Care Administration](#)

Disease Reporting Resources

Disease Reporting Forms: [Practitioners](#) • [Laboratories](#)
[Food and Waterborne Illness Complaint Form](#)

Health Alerts and Advisories

[CDC Travel Health Notices](#)
[FDA Food Recalls](#)
[CDC Health Alert Network](#)

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN SEMINOLE COUNTY

Locations

Main Office

400 W Airport Blvd., Sanford, FL 32773
407-665-3000

Environmental Health

130 San Carlos Ave., Sanford, FL 32773

WIC Satellite Office

132 Sausalito Blvd., Casselberry, FL 32707

Leadership and Public Information

Ethan Johnson, Dr.PH, MPH

Health Officer

Ana Scuteri, MPH

Assistant County Health Department Director

LaTasha Scott APRN, FNP-BC

Executive Community Health Nursing Director

Meena Joseph, MD

Medical Director

Thomas Kellis, FCCM

Administrative Services Director

Mirna Chamorro

Public Information Officer

Disease Reporting

Epidemiology Program

407-665-3243
Fax: 407-845-6055

STI Program

407-665-3216
Fax: 407-845-3295

After Hours Urgent Disease Reporting

407-665-3000 option 1

HIV/AIDS Program

407-665-3240
Fax: 407-858-5985

Tuberculosis Program

407-665-3243
Fax: 407-665-3279

Programs

Asthma Education and Prevention

407-665-3700

Birth and Death Certificates

407-665-3226

Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention

407-665-3185

Dental Care

407-665-3346

Diabetes Prevention

407-665-3263

Environmental Health

407-665-3604

Epidemiology and Surveillance

407-665-3243

Family Planning

407-665-3700

Financial Eligibility

407-665-3700

Florida Healthy Babies

407-665-3064

Health Promotion and Education

407-665-3379

HIV/AIDS Services

407-665-3371

HIV

PEP/NPEP: 407-665-3391
HIV PrEP: 407-665-3690

Immunizations

407-665-3281

Insulin Distribution

407-665-3700

Mobile Health Services

407-665-3391

Public Health Preparedness

407-665-3311

Refugee Health

407-665-3243

School Health

407-665-3433

School Physicals

407-665-3700

Sexually Transmitted Infections

407-665-3700

Teen Clinic

407-665-3700

Tobacco Prevention

407-665-3278

Tuberculosis

407-665-3243

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

407-665-3705

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