

Health Surveillance for FIFA World Cup 2026 – Harris County

- **Heat**
 - Fans and players may be unused to the elevated Houston summer temperatures combined with high humidity levels
 - Within official FIFA locations there will be cooling and misting stations, as well as water and cool towels
 - Public Recommendations: Stay hydrated; seek shade or a cool place when possible
- **Diseases we will be watching:**
 - **Vector borne diseases**
 - Houston/Harris County has the vectors (mosquitos) that carry those diseases
 - We will monitor for West Nile Virus, Dengue, Malaria, Zika, and Oropouche. West Nile is the only one of these diseases that we frequently see in Harris County, making it a risk for people traveling into the area. The other diseases are mainly seen in people returning from travel to a country where the disease is endemic.
 - Countries with similar vectors are mostly found in South America, the Caribbean, and parts of Africa and Asia.
 - Public Recommendations: Use bug spray
 - **MPOX**
 - We have already seen and managed MPOX outbreaks in the US and in Houston/Harris County
 - European countries have had/having outbreaks: Sweden, Netherlands, Poland.
 - There has also been a multi-year outbreak of mpox in the DRC and other countries in Central Africa. This outbreak has centered around the Clade 1 mpox (whereas Clade 2 has accounted for most of the cases outside of Africa). Clade 1 can be more severe and has been spreading outside of sexual networks. It can be treated and controlled the same way as Clade 2.
 - Public Recommendations: Adults who plan to have sexual or intimate contact with people who may be a high-risk of contracting mpox should get vaccinated and use condoms.
 - **Influenza-like-illnesses**
 - We will be monitoring COVID-19, RSV, and flu levels, which include routine wastewater monitoring.

- These levels are regularly monitored for outbreak detection in Harris County
- Public Recommendations:
 - Stay home when sick
 - Wash your hands regularly
 - Cover coughs and sneezes
 - Get your annual Flu and COVID-19 vaccine.
 - RSV immunizations guidelines vary by age, health, and the time of the year. Talk to a healthcare provider to see if an RSV vaccine is recommended.
- **Enteric/GI diseases**
 - There will be an influx of restaurant patrons and fan events where food is served. It will also be summer so people may go swimming. Both of these factors could lead to increased foodborne illnesses, especially those with a fecal-oral route of transmission
 - We will be monitoring salmonella, shigella, cholera, norovirus, and HUS, which include routine wastewater monitoring.
 - Public Recommendations:
 - Do not swim if you have or recently had diarrhea
 - Refrigerate perishable food (meat, seafood, dairy, cut fruit, some vegetables, and cooked leftovers) within 2 hours. If the food is exposed to temperatures above 90°F, like a hot car or picnic, refrigerate it within 1 hour.
 - Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water before eating them in any form.
 - Wash your hands before, during, and after preparing food and before eating. Wash for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm or cold water.
 - Wash utensils, cutting boards, and countertops with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item.
 - Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and their juices away from other foods.
 - Thaw frozen food safely in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave. Never thaw food on the counter because bacteria multiply quickly in the parts of the food that reach room temperature.
 - Use one cutting board or plate for raw meat, poultry, and seafood and a separate cutting board or plate for produce, bread, and other foods that won't be cooked.
- **Measles**

- The US is going into its 2nd year of having major measles outbreaks. We are watching for this condition very closely, as a rapid response is needed in order to limit spread. Wastewater detections will also be monitored.
 - Public Recommendations: Complete the measles vaccine series
 - **Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)**
 - MERS is rare and infection is usually linked to contact with camels. It can spread through respiratory droplets and is highly fatal if contracted.
 - MERS found in the Arabian Peninsula
 - Public Recommendations: The risk to the general public is very low. If a MERS case is detected, the health department will reach out to the affected with guidance.
 - **Polio**
 - While polio is rare in the US, the CDC has issued a broad, global travel alert for Polio for all countries.
 - Polio is endemic in Pakistan and Afghanistan
 - Public Recommendations: Complete the polio vaccine series
 - **Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers (VHF)**
 - *We will be monitoring for VHFs such as ebola, marburg, and lassa fever. These diseases primarily impact countries in central Central, West, and Eastern Africa*
 - *Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic fever (CCHF) is also a concern. This is a rare, but deadly tickborne VHF. CCHF is not found in ticks in North America. Human to human transmission can occur from contact with the bodily fluids of an infected person.*
 - *CCHF is endemic in Africa, the Balkans, the Middle East and Asia in countries south of the 50th parallel north*
 - *As of February 16th, there are no ongoing outbreaks of a VHF.*
 - Public Recommendations: *The risk to the general public is very low. If a VHF case is detected, the health department will reach out to the affected with guidance.*
 - **High Consequence Disease**
 - *We will be monitoring anthrax, plague, tularemia, botulism, smallpox.*
 - *These diseases are potential bioterrorism targets.*
 - Public Recommendations: *If an attack occurs, specific guidance will be issued.*