COVID-19: CDC Museum Closed to the Public

Due to ongoing concerns about the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), the David J. Sencer CDC Museum is closed to the public and will remain closed as we continue to assess and monitor developments. All CDC Museum tours are canceled until further notice.

This decision is being made out of an abundance of caution and based upon the guidance of the CDC regarding social distancing and the elimination of large gatherings.

Please continue to check our website and social media accounts for additional updates.

David J. Sencer CDC Museum

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Museum Info

Hours
Monday: 9am-5pm
Tuesday: 9am-5pm
Wednesday: 9am-5pm
Thursday: 9am-7pm
Friday: 9am-5pm
Closed weekends & federal holidays

Location 1600 Clifton Road NE
Atlanta, GA 30329

Phone 404-639-0830

CDC Timeline 1940s - 1970s

Take a minute to review many of CDC's momentous contributions to public health since it was organized in 1946 as the Communicable Disease Center.

2020s | 2010s | 2000s | 1990s | 1980s | 1970s | 1960s | 1950s | 1940s

1970s

1979
- CDC publishes the first *Healthy People: The Surgeon General's Report on Disease Prevention and Health Promotion*. The report establishes for the first time ambitious, quantifiable objectives for improving the nation's health, to be achieved by 1990
- A Lassa fever World Health Organization Collaborating Center is established in Sierra Leone
- CDC investigates health effects related to the Three-Mile Island nuclear incident
- CDC assumes lead responsibility in the U.S. Public Health Service for environmental emergency response
- Last recorded wild case of polio in the United States

1978
- CDC publishes the first NIOSH/OSHA Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards
- CDC reports the first drug-resistant tuberculosis outbreak; causative organisms are found resistant to the three most commonly-used drugs
- CDC holds the first international conference on Legionnaires' disease
- An expanded maximum containment laboratory (hot lab) is opened to handle viruses that are too dangerous to handle in ordinary laboratories

1977
- CDC receives the report of the last case of naturally-acquired variola minor, the milder strain of the variola virus that causes smallpox, from the Merca District of Somalia
- NIOSH reorganizes; assumes new mine safety and health responsibilities, and

1976
- CDC diagnoses two recruits at Fort Dix, New Jersey with swine flu and concludes that a deadly flu pandemic is on its way. A national immunization program is launched. No epidemic occurs, and before the immunization campaign is terminated, several

Admission & Parking:
Free
Government–issued photo ID required for adults over the age of 18
Passport required for non-U.S. citizens

publishes *Occupational Diseases: A Guide to Their Recognition*

- CDC isolates *Legionella pneumophila*, Legionnaires' disease, the cause of a deadly outbreak in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1975

- CDC establishes the Vessel Sanitation Program in cooperation with the cruise ship industry
- Dental Disease Prevention Activity is transferred to CDC, bringing with it the Fluoridation Program
- The Chronic Disease Division is established to target cancer, birth defects, and environmental health issues
- World Health Organization Collaborating Center for leptospirosis is established at CDC
- CDC creates a national gonorrhea control program to reverse a spiraling trend in the disease
- CDC begins to assist in visa and entry screening, immunization, and follow up of the health of Vietnamese refugees to the United States

1973

- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) transferred to CDC from Health Services & Mental Health Administration
- Office of Biosafety is established at CDC
- CDC begins regularly responding to public health crises abroad by providing famine assistance in sub-Saharan Africa
- Lead-based paint poisoning prevention and urban rat control activities transferred to CDC
- CDC documents the first nationwide outbreak of Reye syndrome

1971

- CDC recommends discontinuation of routine immunization and vaccination requirements for smallpox in the United States
- CDC investigates lead exposure associated with an ore smelter in El Paso, Texas, increasing the scientific understanding of the effects of

people contract Guillain-Barré syndrome from the vaccine

- Epidemiologists investigate a deadly outbreak of a respiratory disease among attendees at a Philadelphia, Pennsylvania convention
- CDC sends disease detectives to investigate two large outbreaks in Zaire and Sudan of an unknown deadly hemorrhagic fever, a disease later known as Ebola
- Environmental Services Division analyzes blood samples collected through NHANES to demonstrate that the level of lead in blood is related to exposure to gasoline. Based on that data, the Environmental Protection Agency implements policies that decrease the amount of lead in gas by half from 1976 – 1980, subsequently dropping levels of lead in blood by 37%, and Congress is persuaded to phase out leaded gas permanently

1974

- CDC establishes Bureau of Health Education, developing health curricula for schools
- Liver cancer deaths are investigated. Vinyl chloride is discovered as a new occupational hazard, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration sets standards to provide worker protection
- Through the Study of the Efficacy of Nosocomial Infection Control (SENIC), CDC begins to monitor trends in hospital-acquired infection rates

1972

- National Clearinghouse for Smoking and Health, a precursor to the Office on Smoking and Health, is transferred to CDC
- CDC establishes the national gonorrhea control program
- Preventive Medicine Residency program is initiated, preparing graduates for leadership roles in public health and general preventive medicine lead poisoning in children, as it can affect children's developing nerves and brains

- CDC's Phoenix laboratories discover that hepatitis B is sexually transmitted
- The National Center for Health Statistics conducts the first National Health Examination Survey with a large nutrition component added. The survey's name is changed to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) Two subsequent surveys are conducted with the surveys becoming an annual event beginning in 1999

1970

- The National Communicable Disease Center (NCDC) is renamed Center for Disease Center (CDC)
- The National Nosocomial Infections Surveillance system is established to monitor infections acquired in hospital settings
- The Nutrition Program is transferred to CDC, charged with assessing the occurrences of severe malnutrition in the United States and abroad
- CDC studies the simultaneous administration of six antigens in vaccinations in Nigerian children
- CDC starts the Birth Defect Monitoring Program, a nationwide hospital-based birth defects surveillance of about 25% of all births in the United States

1960s

1969

- A national rubella immunization campaign begins
- NCDC opens its first biological containment lab to protect scientists while they work with deadly and infectious pathogens
- Inter-Regional Seminar on Smallpox Eradication is held in Lagos, Nigeria to discuss the progress of the Smallpox Eradication Program. A ceremony in Niamey, the Republic of Niger is held to celebrate the 100 millionth smallpox vaccination given in Africa

1968

- NCDC (National Communicable Disease Center) becomes a bureau within the U.S. Public Health Service
- NCDC investigates an unidentified, highly infectious respiratory disease in Pontiac, Michigan, later identified as Legionnaires' disease
- The State and Community Service Division is established, combining venereal disease, tuberculosis, and immunization branches
- NCDC responds to its first major initiative in famine relief within Nigeria during the Biafran war, assisting local health officials in conducting nutrition and disease assessments
- A tuberculosis surveillance system begins within the United States
- NCDC responds to influenza pandemic triggered by the influenza A(H3N2) virus

1967

- The Quarantine Service, one of the oldest units of the U.S. Public Health Service, is transferred to CDC
- CDC begins the Metropolitan Atlanta Congenital Defects Program (MACDP) a population-based tracking system for birth defects in collaboration with Georgia Mental Health Institute and the Emory University School of Medicine
- The Communicable Disease Center is renamed The National Communicable Disease Center (NCDC) and the title of Chief of the Center is changed to CDC Director
- Reproductive health activities first begin, (today's Division of Reproductive Health) to include family

1966

- CDC announces a national measles eradication campaign at the American Public Health Association meeting
- The International Malaria Eradication Program is moved to CDC from the Agency for International Development (AID)

planning and healthier mothers and babies

1965

- New surveillance systems added to the original National Surveillance Program of 1952 include measles, shigellosis, tetanus, and trichinosis
- The special Interagency Committee on Back Contamination (ICBC) is created to determine how to protect Earth from moon contamination
- A four-week smallpox campaign in Anapa, Brazil is launched to demonstrate and evaluate the jet injector equipment in field operations under a variety of conditions

1963

- Immunization Assistance Grant Program is established and CDC administers Vaccination Assistance Act through project grants. The program is designed to raise and maintain high levels of immunization against; poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), and tetanus
- Smallpox Unit of the Surveillance Section is established in Bureau of Epidemiology
- The *Aedes aegypti* Eradication Branch is established to eradicate this mosquito from the Americas, as well as to protect against outbreaks of yellow fever and dengue fever
- All state health departments, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Department of Agriculture join CDC in establishing the *Salmonella* Surveillance Program

1961

- CDC takes over publication of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (*MMWR*) from the National Office of Vital Statistics. *MMWR* is a weekly publication, containing a few short narrative reports and the weekly morbidity and mortality tables. It also publishes the annual "Summary of Notifiable Diseases"
- A field station to study fungal and viral diseases is established in Kansas City, Kansas
- An investigation into a cancer cluster expands CDC's reach into chronic diseases

- Smallpox Eradication Program is established to manage AID-funded *Smallpox Eradication/Measles Control Program* in African countries
- CDC installs first computer system with 16,000 characters of memory. It is used to for batch business-oriented applications

1964

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) approaches CDC for help in working out methods that would ensure that germs from Earth do not get transported into space
- CDC holds first meeting of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), to provide advice and guidance on the appropriate use of biologics and other preventive medical agents for effective disease control in the civilian population
- Hospital Infections Unit is established as part of the epidemiology program
- First jet injector studies with smallpox vaccine are conducted in the country of Tonga
- CDC assigns an EIS officer to work on family planning, expanding the agency's work to global population issues
- First *Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health* is published

1962

- CDC's Audiovisual Training Branch changes its name to the National Medical Audiovisual Facility, establishing it as the central audiovisual facility for the U.S. Public Health Service. In 1967, the group is renamed the National Medical Audiovisual Center and administratively transferred to the National Library of Medicine
- CDC's Venereal Disease Program changes its name to National Syphilis Eradication program as efforts are placed on strengthening the epidemiologic process
- CDC establishes a Laboratory Consultation and Development Section to upgrade laboratory performance and to promote increased standardization

1960

- The Tuberculosis Program transfers from the U.S. Public Health Service to CDC. The Tuberculosis Laboratory was already in Atlanta at Lawson General Hospital, having moved there several years earlier
- The first National Health Examination Survey is conducted to collect data on the total prevalence of certain chronic diseases as well as the population distribution of various physical and physiological measures
- CDC opens new permanent headquarters buildings in Atlanta, Georgia

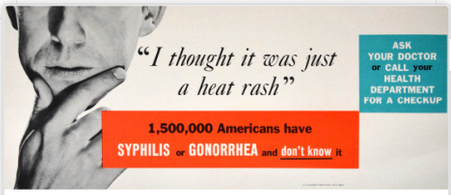
1950s

1959

- A fluorescent antibody test is developed for rabies and field trials demonstrate 100 percent accuracy
- A *Staphylococcus* Surveillance Unit is established to coordinate information, compile references and review directives and reports on hospital-acquired infections
- The Standard New Jersey light trap is modified to create a lightweight and portable mosquito trap to collect samples in swamps and remote areas where electricity is not available

1958

- Epidemics of cholera and smallpox prompt the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) to send a CDC team of EIS officers to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) to conduct an epidemiological study and to give epidemic aid
- CDC investigates the first recorded epidemic of inhalation anthrax in the 20th century at a goat hair processing plant
- CDC participates in a cooperative program to develop accurate, standard cholesterol measurement procedures. From this research the Cholesterol Standardization Program is developed



1957

- An influenza pandemic emerges in Hong Kong with millions of cases and thousands of deaths. CDC quickly sets up an influenza surveillance unit, a joint operation of the Epidemiology and Laboratory Branches
- National guidelines for an influenza vaccine are developed
- The Venereal Disease Division is transferred from the U.S. Public Health Service to CDC, bringing two

1956

- The first practical use for the fluorescent antibody technique is utilized in the CDC laboratories to research communicable diseases of bacterial origin important innovations to CDC's activities: a grant program and a new kind of employee, public health advisors

- The rapid plasma reagin (RPR) blood test for syphilis is developed at Venereal Disease Research Laboratory (VDRL) on the Chamblee campus. It is both a fast and accurate serologic test for syphilis

1955

- During the national polio immunization program, EIS officers trace 260 polio cases to improper vaccine production methods. As a result, the CDC establishes the Polio Surveillance Program
- CDC gains worldwide recognition for the quality and quantity of its contributions to the taxonomy of the Enterobacteriaceae, a family of germs that is difficult to treat because of its resistance to antibiotics
- The Senate subcommittee on Public Works approves construction of the new CDC Clifton Road Facility in Atlanta, Georgia

1954

- National Rabies Control Activities Unit is established, providing a coordinated program for all aspects of the disease
- The EIS is expanded to include other professional disciplines besides medicine

1953

- CDC reports first case of rabies in a bat
- The Communicable Disease Center National Surveillance Program is developed to maintain constant vigilance over communicable diseases, to respond immediately when an outbreak occurs
- Twenty EIS officers collaborated in the National Program for the Evaluation of Gamma Globulin in the Prophylaxis of Poliomyelitis
- The U.S. Public Health Service becomes part of the newly created Cabinet-level Department of Health, Education and Welfare after the Federal Security Agency is dissolved
- First EIS investigations on environmental exposure to trichloroethylene and occupational exposure

1952

- The Epidemic Intelligence Service participates in 205 outbreaks including involvement in a lead paint investigation, marking the first time an EIS officer specialized in a noninfectious disease
- Reorganization of the CDC reduces the number of branches into five well-defined spheres of activity: Epidemiology, Training, Technology, Laboratory, and Administrative

1951

- Malaria is considered eliminated from the United States
- The Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) is established, recognizing the need for an adequate corps of trained epidemiologists who can be deployed immediately for any contingency, including chemical or biological

1950

- A team of CDC physicians, engineers, and entomologists is sent to Southeast Asia to assist in developing malaria control programs and public health programs as part of an overall technical and economic assistance program warfare

- CDC begins a program to study public health insect problems connected with water resource development
- Two field stations are established: one to study the effect of economic poisons (pesticides) on humans, and the other to study tropical diseases

- CDC begins to withdraw from active participation in the operational phases of the National Malaria Eradication Program and discontinues the Malaria Control Residual Spray Program, shifting interest to surveillance, supporting training programs, consultation and research studies with the states
- A committee on air-borne disease studies is established, with emphasis on sampling techniques and devices adaptable to biological warfare defense

1940s

1949

- The Production Division is renamed the Audio-Visual Production Division, producing more than 50 health films for field training
- CDC's Reference Diagnostic Service Center becomes available to all public health laboratories. Practicing physicians who have hard-to-identify specimens submit through their health departments
- CDC becomes a division of the Bureau of State Services of the U.S. Public Health Service, primarily concerned with assisting state health authorities
- The United States is declared free of malaria as a significant public health problem
- Last case of naturally-occurring smallpox is reported in the United States

1948

- Rabies investigation activities are conducted at the Virus & Rickettsia Laboratory in Montgomery, Alabama
- CDC assists the Imperial Iranian Government in planning and establishing a national malaria control program
- CDC conducts first training courses in Laboratory Diagnosis of Tuberculosis and Mycotic Diseases
- CDC investigations expand to include, typhus, dysentery-diarrheal, fly control-poliomyelitis, viral encephalitis, plague, Q fever, brucellosis, creeping eruption, rabies, histoplasmosis, insecticides, and rodenticides

1947

- CDC acquires the U.S. Public Health Service Plague Suppressive Laboratory which includes an epidemiology division
- Emory University deeds 15 acres of land to the Federal Government for the development of CDC headquarters on Clifton Road in Atlanta, Georgia
- CDC establishes the Veterinary Public Health Division, focusing on protecting and improving both animal and human health
- CDC offers disaster aid in response to multiple chemical explosions in Texas City, Texas. Subsequently, CDC is designated as the official response agency for future epidemics and disasters
- CDC begins a five-year study on what role flies have in the spread and transmission of poliomyelitis
- CDC is transferred from the State

1946

- July 1, Malaria Control in War Areas, a program within the U.S. Public Health Service, transitions into the Communicable Disease Center (CDC)
- CDC stations the Laboratory Division at the Lawson Veterans Administration Hospital in Chamblee, Georgia

Relations Division and established as a field station under the immediate direction of the Chief of the Bureau of State Services of the U.S. Public Health Service

Related Links

- Request a Speaker
- Public Health Grand Rounds
- CDC History
- About CDC
- Smithsonian Institution

Other Resources

- View CDC Museum Slideshow
- CDC Museum Brochure [8.8 MB, 2 Pages, 16" x 9"]
- CDC Museum Press Sheet [2.3 MB, 1 page]

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