

[Outbreaks overview](#)[List of outbreaks in Oregon in 2019](#)

## Disease outbreaks

Oregon state and local health departments investigated 429 acute and communicable disease outbreaks in 2019, up 24% from 346 in 2018. Outbreaks in 2019 were the result of multiple modes of disease transmission: 15 outbreaks were foodborne, 231 were respiratory, 141 were due to person-to-person transmission, nine were due to animal contact and one was waterborne. There was also one outbreak of lung injury associated with the use of e-cigarette, or vaping, products – this nationwide outbreak included 26 Oregonians that met CDC's case definition. The mode of transmission was indeterminate or unknown in 31 outbreaks. Among the 231 respiratory outbreaks in 2019, sharing of respiratory secretions caused outbreaks of influenza (179), pertussis (22), respiratory syncytial virus (12) and measles (4), among others.

Foods contaminated with a variety of *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, *Vibrio* and shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* made folks ill at a variety of venues. Almost every outbreak reinforces the tried-and-true public health mantras of “wash your hands” and “cover your cough.”

Respiratory outbreaks were by far the most commonly reported type of outbreak, accounting for 54% (231) of outbreaks investigated in 2019. Outbreaks of gastroenteritis were a close second, accounting for 43% (185) of all reported outbreaks in 2019.

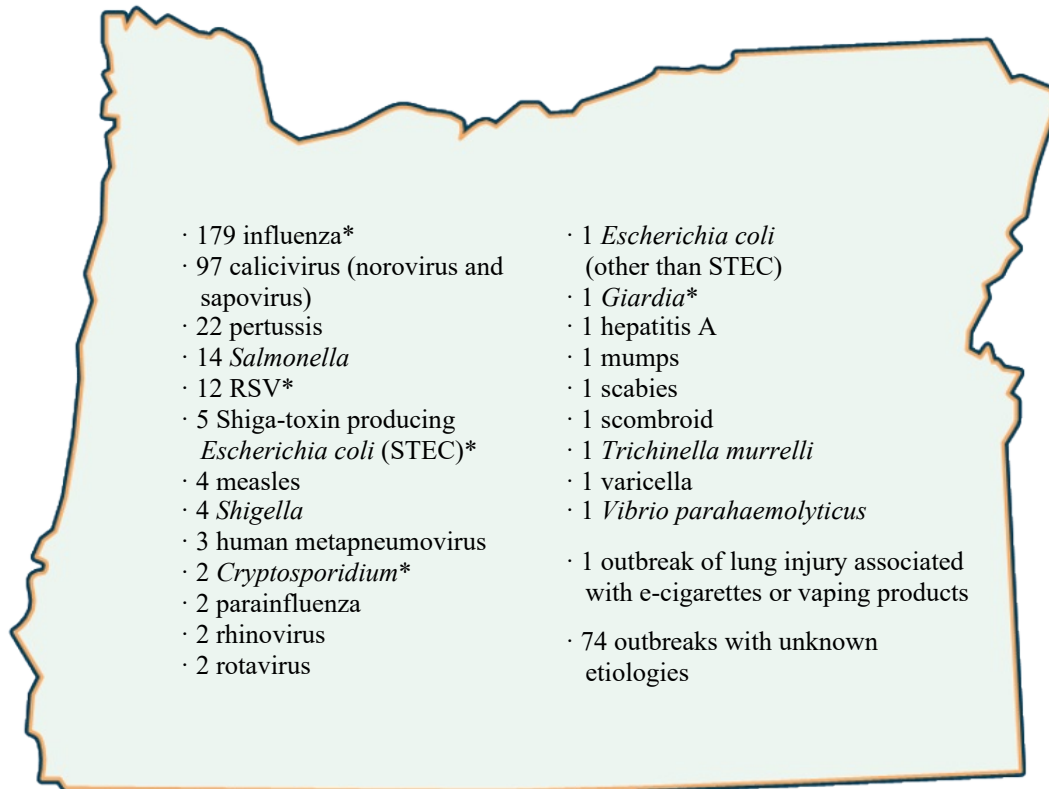
Thanks to rigorous specimen collection, 277 (65%) of all outbreaks investigated in 2019 were confirmed. Sixty-nine percent (127/185) of gastroenteritis outbreaks had disease-causing agents identified, mostly caliciviruses (norovirus and sapovirus), and disease-causing agents were identified in 96% of respiratory outbreaks (222/231). As of May 1, 2019 the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL) discontinued testing for norovirus in long-term care facilities experiencing outbreaks of noro-like illness. OSPHL can test for sapovirus, astrovirus and rotavirus when stool specimens are norovirus-negative.



[Return to table of contents](#) 

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Oregon in 2019



\*Note: 1 outbreak in 2019 was a combination of both influenza and RSV; 1 outbreak was a combination of STEC, *Cryptosporidium*, and *Giardia*.

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Return to table of contents 