

Outbreak Investigation

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1. Introduction

- An outbreak is the occurrence of more cases of a disease than expected in an area or group.
- Investigation aims to stop the outbreak and prevent future ones.

2. Steps in Investigation

- **Confirm the outbreak and diagnosis:** verify that cases are real and above the expected number.
- **Define a case:** set clear clinical and epidemiological criteria.
- **Find and count cases:** active case finding using a line list.

3. Descriptive Analysis

- Describe cases by person, place, and time.
- Draw an epidemic curve to show the pattern and likely source.

4. Hypothesis and Testing

- Form a hypothesis about the source and mode of spread.
- Test it with analytical methods such as a case-control study.

5. Control and Communication

- Implement control measures: remove the source, protect those at risk, and treat cases.
- Communicate findings and write a report for future prevention.

6. Summary

- Outbreak investigation follows a systematic sequence from confirming cases to implementing control measures and reporting.