PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
2025– PAHAN – 786– 02-21- ADV

Pennsylvania Department of Health

Report Serious Adverse Events After Ceftriaxone Administration

DATE:	February 21, 2025
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Debra L. Bogen, MD, FAAP, Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	**Report Serious Adverse Events After Ceftriaxone Administration**
DISTRIBUTION:	Statewide
LOCATION:	Statewide
STREET ADDRESS:	n/a
COUNTY:	n/a
MUNICIPALITY:	n/a
ZIP CODE:	n/a

This transmission is a "Health Advisory" which provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

HOSPITALS: PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, INFECTION CONTROL, PHARMACY, NURSING AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL; EMS COUNCILS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; FQHCs: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP; LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES: PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, INFECTION CONTROL, AND NURSING STAFF IN YOUR FACILITY

Summary:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in collaboration with state and local health departments, is investigating reports of serious adverse events, including deaths, following receipt of injectable ceftriaxone.
- To date, events have not been associated with a single product manufacturer or lot, and a definitive causal link to ceftriaxone has not been established.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) is requesting reports of serious adverse events following the administration of ceftriaxone to assist with the ongoing investigation.
- If you have any questions, or to report cases, please call your local health department or contact DOH at 877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3528).

Background

The CDC, in collaboration with state and local health departments, is investigating reports of serious adverse events, including deaths, following receipt of injectable ceftriaxone. CDC is requesting reports of serious adverse events following the administration of ceftriaxone to assist with the ongoing investigation.

To date, events have not been associated with a single product manufacturer or lot, and a definitive causal link to ceftriaxone has not been established. Events have been reported mostly in the southeastern United States and involved ceftriaxone administered intramuscularly, via intravenous "push," and via intravenous "piggyback," in both inpatient and outpatient settings.

Recommendations for Health Care Providers and Health Care Facility Administrators

As federal, state, and local public health agencies work together to understand the epidemiology of these adverse events and determine the etiology, health care providers and health care facility administrators are recommended to:

- Use clinical judgment when administering ceftriaxone. At this time, there is no recommendation to withhold ceftriaxone if it is the best agent for a patient's bacterial infection.
- As a reminder, ceftriaxone and other antibiotics are not effective against viral infections, which comprise the majority of upper respiratory infections. Providers should minimize use of any unnecessary antibiotics to decrease the likelihood of adverse events.
- Review post-injection monitoring protocols in your setting to verify adverse events are promptly detected and reported.
- Should an event be detected in real time, please retain open ceftriaxone product administered to the patient, if possible. Further instruction may be given by CDC. At this time, there is no recommendation to sequester unused product or withhold ceftriaxone administration for patients that need it.
- **Report serious adverse events following the administration of ceftriaxone to assist with the ongoing investigation. DOH is requesting you report adverse events that meet the following criteria, occurring after September 1, 2024:**

    1. Occurred within 6 hours after receipt of injectable* ceftriaxone in a non-ICU setting, and
    2. Resulted in death or required cardiopulmonary resuscitation**, and
    3. Not attributed by the treating provider(s) to a cause other than ceftriaxone administration***

    **including both intramuscular and intravenous routes of administration*

    ***cardiopulmonary resuscitation defined as the use of chest compressions and mechanical ventilation or provision of rescue breaths to maintain circulatory flow and oxygenation during cardiac arrest*

    ****such as known infection, other underlying medical condition, or exposure to a medication or medical product other than ceftriaxone*

Reports should be made to your local health department or to DOH by calling 1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258). Reports will be routed to the Department's Division of Healthcare Associated Infection Prevention for coordination with CDC.

Health care providers should also report serious adverse events that might be associated with a medical product to FDA's MedWatch Program and to the product manufacturer.

If you have additional questions about this guidance, please contact your local health department or DOH at 1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258).

Individuals interested in receiving PA-HANs are encouraged to register at HAN Notification Registration.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of February 21, 2025 but may be modified in the future.