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## Article No. 5 - Vol. 28, No. 4 - December 2009

## Epidemiological Calendar 2010

The uses of surveillance data include the description and comparison of disease patterns using the person, place, and time variables. In particular, examples of the use of the time variable can be found in the earliest known epidemiological studies. For example, in a report on the 1847 influenza epidemic in London, William Farr presented data collected by week and easily calculated the excess of mortality due to influenza in different periods of the year. (1)

The discussion among statisticians from various disciplines on the use of specific time units seems to have been a constant at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In May 1925, a document was presented to the British Royal Statistical Society, which argues for the first time that a period of time shorter than the calendar month (the week) is necessary as a "principle of division" of the year for purposes of vital statistics analysis. (2)

Today, there is an international consensus about the use of a standard time period to group deaths or other epidemiological events. This period is generally the week and is known as the epidemiological week. The division of the 365 days of the year in 52 epidemiological weeks is known as the epidemiological calendar. It is a way to standardize the time variable for the purpose of epidemiological surveillance.

The importance of this division and above all of the use of the epidemiological week relies on the fact that it allows for the comparison of epidemiological events that occurred in a given year or period of a year, with that of previous years. It also facilitates the comparison between countries.

Epidemiological weeks start on a Sunday and end on a Saturday; The first epidemiological week of the year ends, by definition, on the first Saturday of January, as long as it falls at least four days into the month, even if it means that this first week starts in December.

The 2010 Epidemiological Calendar begins on **3 January 2010**. To illustrate the previous point, the following correspond to the first epidemiological weeks of a few consecutive years:

2005 January 2 – January 8, 2005

2006 January 1 – January 7, 2006

2007 December 31, 2006 – January 6, 2007

2008 December 30, 2007 – January 5, 2008

2009 January 4 – January 10, 2009

2010 January 3 – January 9, 2010

<b>EW</b>	<b>Mo</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thu</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>Mo</b>
1	Jan	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Jan
2	Jan	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Jan
3	Jan	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	Jan
4	Jan	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Jan
5	Jan	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	Feb
6	Feb	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Feb
7	Feb	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Feb
8	Feb	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	Feb
9	Feb	28	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mar
10	Mar	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Mar
11	Mar	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Mar
12	Mar	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	Mar
13	Mar	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	Apr
14	Apr	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Apr
15	Apr	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Apr
16	Apr	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Apr
17	Apr	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	May
18	May	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	May
19	May	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	May
20	May	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	May
21	May	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	May
22	May	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	Jun
23	Jun	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Jun
24	Jun	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	Jun
25	Jun	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Jun
26	Jun	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	Jul
27	Jul	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Jul
28	Jul	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Jul
29	Jul	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Jul
30	Jul	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Jul
31	Aug	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Aug
32	Aug	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Aug
33	Aug	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Aug
34	Aug	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	Aug
35	Aug	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	Sep
36	Sep	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Sep
37	Sep	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sep
38	Sep	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	Sep
39	Sep	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	Oct
40	Oct	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Oct
41	Oct	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Oct
42	Oct	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	Oct
43	Oct	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Oct
44	Oct	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	Nov
45	Nov	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Nov
46	Nov	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Nov
47	Nov	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	Nov
48	Nov	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	Dec
49	Dec	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Dec
50	Dec	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Dec

51	Dec	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	Dec
52	Dec	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	Jan

References

- (1) Langmuir AD. William Farr: Founder of Modern Concepts of Surveillance. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 1976; 5(1):13-18
- (2) Watkins H. *Time counts: the story of the calendar*. New York, Philosophical Library. 1954

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