

# Career Spotlight



CDC NERD Academy



## Epidemiologist

An epidemiologist, also known as a disease detective, investigates the causes of diseases, how diseases are spread, and how diseases can be prevented or controlled. During an outbreak, epidemiologists collect and analyze information about who is sick, when they became sick, and exposures they may have had before becoming sick to determine where, when, and how each person may have become infected. Then, they translate this information into recommendations for prevention and control measures.



**Meet Ezra,  
an epidemiologist**

### *Who do they work with?*

Epidemiologists collaborate with a wide range of public health professionals at the local, state, and federal levels, including other epidemiologists, hospital and health department staff, data managers, biostatisticians, laboratory scientists, health educators, communication specialists, policy makers, and animal health personnel (like veterinarians).

### *Where do they work?*

Epidemiologists may work in local, state, federal, and international public health agencies; hospitals; universities; and anywhere an investigation requires their detective skills.

### *What skills do they use?*

Knowledge of descriptive and analytic epidemiology, ability to analyze data and interpret findings, ability to think critically and problem solve, strong math skills, ability to communicate clearly to different audiences, willingness to work in different environments, and ability to work collaboratively with other experts and public health partners.

### *What qualifications do they need?*

Epidemiologists often have a bachelor's degree in any science field, such as nutrition, public health, or biology, and a master's or doctoral degree in epidemiology. Undergraduate degrees in mathematics (especially statistics) or the social sciences (such as geography or sociology) are also useful.