

EPI Update for Friday, August 17, 2012
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Rabies consultations increasing in recent weeks**
- **Use of DEET-based insect repellent important for prevention**
- **Updated gonorrhea treatment guidelines from CDC**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Rabies consultations increasing in recent weeks

As expected, IDPH has received an increasing number of bat-related rabies calls in recent weeks. These calls usually peak in August and September when human/ bat interactions likely increase due to bat migration, and young bat pups becoming mobile and beginning to travel.

IDPH frequently receives questions about rabies, including:

1. Can we start vaccine and immune-globulin before lab results are received;
2. Do people who wake up to a bat in the bedroom need post-exposure prophylaxis (rabies shots); and
3. How and where can a bat be tested?

Answers to these and other questions can be found on our rabies website at www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Rabies.

Two rabies exposure management posters (flow charts to assist decision making) are available through our clearing house at no cost. They can be ordered by clicking "Get Free Materials" on the above website.

So far this year, IDPH has consulted on more than 450 rabies-related situations and issues; 23 animals have tested positive for rabies, including 10 bats, eight skunks, four cows, and one cat. To view a map of where positive animals have been identified, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/IDPHChannelsService/file.ashx?file=B3CC0F85-C98C-42D9-A28B-B4C870216456).

IDPH provides 24/7 consultation for rabies. During business hours, call 800-362-2736. After-hours, call 515-323-4360 (the State Patrol will page on-call staff).

Use of DEET-based insect repellent important for prevention

Thus far in 2012, 693 cases of West Nile virus have been reported nationally. Iowa has had three cases; an expected number, considering Iowa's mosquito activity has been low (likely due to the dry conditions). Even so, Iowa typically sees most of its cases in August and September, so our West Nile season is actually just starting.

The low mosquito activity may cause people to be less likely to use insect repellent. Even with the current low activity, it's important that DEET-based insect repellent be

used when outdoors because it repels ticks, as well as mosquitoes. Cases of Lyme disease carried by ticks are up about 30 percent compared to last year. DEET-based insect repellent can help prevent West Nile virus, Lyme disease, and other diseases spread by insects.

For more information about DEET and the use of insect repellent on children, visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/CADE/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=West Nile Virus](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/CADE/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=West+Nile+Virus). For information on tick-borne diseases, visit www.cdc.gov/ticks/diseases/index.html.

Updated gonorrhea treatment guidelines from CDC

In response to increasing antimicrobial resistance of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, the CDC recently released an update to the STD treatment guidelines. The only recommended treatment for gonorrhea is now 250 mg ceftriaxone (IM injection) plus 1 gram azithromycin (oral doses of doxycycline 100 mg b.i.d. for 7 days may be used in place of azithromycin). Alternative oral treatment regimens are available, but they should only be used as a last resort. If an alternative regimen is used, CDC now recommends a test-of-cure after 7 days to ensure the treatment was successful.

Gonorrhea is a very common infectious disease. CDC estimates that annually, more than 700,000 people in the United States get new gonorrhea infections.

The State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL) is in the process of validating a new method of specimen collection for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* culture. While nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs) remain the preferred testing method for the initial screening of gonorrhea, cultures are preferred for tests of cure and antimicrobial resistance testing. This test may be routinely available in October.

For more information, contact IDPH STD Program manager George Walton at George.Walton@idph.iowa.gov or 515-281-4936, or see CDC's updated treatment guidelines at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6131a3.htm?s_cid=mm6131a3_e and their response plan at www.cdc.gov/std/treatment/Ceph-R-ResponsePlanJuly30-2012.pdf.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a happy and healthy week!

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