

EPI Update for Friday, September 27, 2013
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Time to start thinking flu!**
- **Get your flu vaccination now**
- **Cryptosporidiosis case count continues to rise**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Time to start thinking flu!

The State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL) and IDPH have updated the influenza testing algorithm. Key points include:

- Laboratories using rapid antigen tests should send all positive specimens to the State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL) until one positive test is confirmed by RT-PCR (or until otherwise instructed).
- Hospitals should send specimens from rapid test positive hospitalized patients with influenza-like illness to SHL for confirmatory testing.
- ILINet sentinel providers should send specimens on patients with influenza-like illness according to IDPH/SHL guidelines.
- Contact IDPH for guidance in the event of an influenza outbreak.

For the entire testing algorithm, visit

www.idph.state.ia.us/IDPHChannelsService/file.ashx?file=3FFA5200-7AE3-42BF-A488-09226911D597.

For information from SHL (including links to test kit and test request forms), visit

www.shl.uiowa.edu/dcd/influenza/.

Thank you in advance to all surveillance sites for your participation this season. Weekly Iowa Influenza Surveillance Reports will resume the week ending October 11, 2013. To view the flu reports, visit

www.idph.state.ia.us/IdphArchive/Archive.aspx?channel=FluReports.

Encourage flu vaccination now

Please continue to encourage flu vaccinations. Outbreaks can begin as early as October (although commonly peak flu activity happens in January or later). Since it takes about two weeks after vaccination to develop immunity, being vaccinated now will provide protection before the flu starts spreading in communities. Every Iowan over 6 months of age should receive the flu vaccine. It is especially important for those at higher risk of developing serious complications, like pneumonia. High risk groups include:

- Pregnant women
- Children, especially those younger than 2 years of age
- Older adults, especially those aged 65 years and over

- People who have certain medical conditions like asthma, diabetes and chronic lung disease

For more information on the kinds of flu vaccine available this year, visit www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm.

Cryptosporidiosis case count continues to rise

There have been 1,015 cases of cryptosporidium reported in Iowa so far this year, compared to 328 cases reported in 2012. The number of cases reported each day has decreased since the peak in mid-summer, but remains high. Cases have reported a wide range of well-known risk factors for cryptosporidium, including recreational water exposure, contact with diapers, and contact with livestock and other animals. Prevention of cryptosporidium includes proper hand washing, avoiding swimming while ill with diarrhea, and keeping young children home from child care while they are ill with diarrhea.

For more information on cryptosporidium, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/cade/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Cryptosporidium.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

Save the Date: 2013 Influenza Teleconference/Webinar: October 22, 2013, 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. Registration information is forthcoming.

Extension Training Program for Infection Prevention: October 7-11, 2013 at the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics in Iowa City. The five-day intensive program is designed to provide fundamental and current information relevant to infection prevention and control professionals. Scientific, regulatory, economic, and practice information will be included. Contact Martha Freeman at 319-356-1742 for more information.

Online course promotes awareness and prevention of companion animal zoonotic diseases and collaboration among health professionals

The Center for Food Security and Public Health at Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine is offering of a new web-based course October 7 – November 3, 2013. The *Zoonoses: Protecting People and Their Pets* course provides an excellent opportunity for animal and human health care professionals and students to refresh and gain knowledge of key zoonotic diseases of companion animals. To find out more and to register, visit <http://zoonoses.info>.

Have a healthy and happy week!

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