

EPI Update for Friday, March 4, 2011
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Influenza testing clarification**
- **2010 rabies summary available on IDPH website**
- **Updated norovirus guidelines issued by CDC**
- **CADE staff email addresses will change next week**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Influenza testing clarification

In response to several questions about influenza testing in Iowa, the current testing guidelines for the State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL) are included below. SHL will provide testing for the following categories of patients:

1. Patients that are hospitalized with influenza-like illness. Submit an NP swab in viral transport medium.
2. If a patient with influenza-like illness has been vaccinated and the rapid test is positive for influenza, submit a separately collected NP swab to SHL for further study of the virus. Note that the patient was vaccinated on the test request form.
3. Confirmation of a rapid positive test is not needed at this point in the influenza season because of the high incidence of influenza in the state; however, if confirmation is desired, submit an NP swab in viral transport medium. The best specimen for confirmation is a separately collected NP swab, not the remaining specimen used for rapid testing.

A PDF of the testing criteria (algorithm) can be found at www.uhl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/influenzaalgorithm.pdf.

For guidance on specimen collection and submission, see www.uhl.uiowa.edu/services/influenza/. For more information on influenza, see www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/iisn.asp

2010 rabies summary available on IDPH website

In 2010, 27 cases of animal rabies were reported in Iowa (typically only animals that have exposed humans or other domestic animals are tested – we do not test random samples of animals nor road kill.) Almost all Iowa rabies testing is done at the State Hygienic Laboratory and Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

Rabies was identified most frequently in wildlife species including 13 skunks, 10 bats, and one fox. Two cases were diagnosed in companion animals including one cat and one dog. One cow also tested positive. During 2010, approximately 1479 animals were tested for rabies in Iowa and 27 were confirmed positive (1.83 percent). The percent positive varies greatly by species.

Iowa's most recent human rabies case occurred in 2002. Prior to that, the last reported human case occurred in 1951. While the exact number of people who receive rabies post-exposure prophylaxis each year in the United States is unknown, it is estimated to be about 40,000 people. Based upon Iowa's population, that would equate to approximately 390 Iowans receiving preventative treatment (rabies immune globulin and rabies vaccine) each year.

To access the complete summary, which includes a map of confirmed animal rabies cases by county, visit

www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/cade/rabies_summary_2010.pdf .

Updated norovirus guidelines issued by CDC

Noroviruses are the most common cause of epidemic gastroenteritis; they are responsible for 50 percent of all gastroenteritis outbreaks worldwide. The CDC has issued updated guidance on norovirus. To access the guidance, please visit

www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6003a1.htm?s_cid=rr6003a1_e.

CADE staff email addresses will change next week

CADE staff email addresses will be changing next week. The new format for email addresses will be first.last@idph.iowa.gov.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy week!

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