

EPI Update for Friday, September 9, 2011
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Home food safety myth busters**
- **Early childhood vaccination rates rise in Iowa**
- **Agriculture health and safety resource**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Home food safety myth busters (part 2)

September is National Food Safety Education Month and the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) encourages all Iowans to learn the truth behind some common food safety 'myths.' This week's myth is about fruits and vegetables.

Myth: I eat a vegetarian diet, so I don't have to worry about food poisoning.

Fact: Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet, but like other foods, they may carry a risk of foodborne illness. Always rinse produce under running tap water, including fruits and vegetables with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Never use detergent or bleach to wash fresh fruits or vegetables, as these products are not intended for consumption. Packaged fruits and vegetables labeled "ready-to-eat" or "washed" do not need to be re-washed.

To learn more about how to reduce your risk of foodborne illness and for additional information about food safety myths, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/food_safety.asp

Early childhood vaccination rates rise in Iowa

According to the CDC's National Immunization Survey, more young children are getting immunized in Iowa. In 2010, 73 percent of 2-year-old children in Iowa had received the recommended immunizations, which is above the national average of 70 percent, and an increase of 13 percent from the previous year.

The percentage of children receiving the Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) and Rotavirus vaccine series also increased in Iowa in 2010; the percentage rose from 51 percent in 2009 to 66 percent last year. Iowa's increase exceeded the national rise from 51 percent in 2009 to nearly 64 percent in 2010.

The Hib vaccine prevents meningitis (an infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord), pneumonia (lung infection), epiglottitis (a severe throat infection), and other serious infections caused by a type of bacteria called Haemophilus influenzae type b. It is recommended for all children under 5 years old in the U.S., and it is usually given to infants starting at 2 months old.

Rotavirus is the leading cause of severe vomiting and diarrhea among children worldwide. Before the vaccine, rotavirus was responsible for 58,000 to 70,000 pediatric hospitalizations each year. According to the CDC, rotavirus vaccination indirectly

resulted in about 10,000 fewer hospitalizations in 2008 in unvaccinated children aged 5 years and older in the U.S., saving a total of \$40 million in health care costs.

For more information about vaccination rates in Iowa, immunization schedules and more, visit the Immunization Resources page of the IDPH website at www.idph.state.ia.us/ImmTB/Immunization.aspx?prog=Imm&pg=Resources

Agriculture health and safety resource

Ten farm work-related fatalities have occurred in Iowa since the beginning of July, 2011. There are agriculture health and safety resources available to support the medical providers who care for farmers and their families, including the AgriSafe Network. The AgriSafe Network is a national non-profit organization that started in Iowa, whose mission is to support a growing network of trained agricultural health and safety professionals who assure access to preventative services for farm families and the agricultural community.

For more information on the AgriSafe Network visit www.agrisafe.org/
To contact the IDPH Occupational Health & Safety Surveillance Program, call 800-972-2026.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

Disease Epidemiology and Prevention XV (2011 Fall Epi Update)

The Fall Epi Update will be held in Des Moines on September 21. Topics include acute disease trends, public information considerations, tuberculosis update and more. For more information, visit

www.idph.state.ia.us/IDPHChannelsService/file.ashx?file=95B7E505-C5D5-423D-BE78-B36AE5DA188E .

Have a healthy and happy week!

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