

EPI Update for November 23, 2011- ALERT
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Flu Activity in Iowa Includes a Novel Strain

Routine surveillance by the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), the State Hygienic Lab and other partners across the state indicate that a novel strain of the influenza virus has been detected in three children in Webster and Hamilton Counties. This virus, an influenza A/H3N2 recombinant virus, has also been detected in other states in recent months (Pennsylvania, Maine and Indiana).

Symptoms are similar to the regular seasonal flu. All three children sought medical care but were not hospitalized, and have recovered.

This influenza A/H3N2 virus contains components of human, avian, H1N1, and swine influenza. All spread has been human to human. Although spread appears to be limited, two other family members had reported influenza-like illness around the same time but were not tested. No further cases have been identified in the last week. None of the cases had any animal exposure. Because the virus is unique, surveillance has been increased at clinics and emergency rooms in Webster and Hamilton Counties.

All health care providers in Iowa should continue to submit their first 3 positives for Influenza A virus. This will allow SHL to perform subtyping and determine if more of this novel strain is causing illness in patients in Iowa.

For more information on influenza testing at SHL, please visit www.shl.uiowa.edu/services/influenza.

For more information, please visit www.idph.state.ia.us/IdphNews/Reader.aspx?id=A9B82864-57E2-4EFD-8836-24DF9400B43D and www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/Influenza.aspx?pg=FluHome.

Have a healthy and happy Thanksgiving!

Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology
Iowa Department of Public Health
800-362-2736