EPI Update for Friday, September 28, 2012
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Flu virus confirmed to be circulating in Iowa**
- **When to vaccinate against influenza**
- **Binge drinking**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Flu virus confirmed to be circulating in Iowa

All Iowans, age 6 months and older, are urged to receive a flu vaccine now, since flu has been confirmed in Iowa and is spreading. Although influenza is not a reportable disease, year-round influenza surveillance is performed to determine the types of influenza viruses circulating and how widespread influenza illness is. For more information on flu, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/Influenza.aspx?pg=FluHome.

When to vaccinate against influenza

It is recommended everyone 6 months of age and older receive seasonal influenza vaccine as soon as vaccine becomes available. Some children 8 years old or younger may need two doses of flu vaccine, spaced at least four weeks apart, to achieve optimal protection (see the 2012-2013 Influenza Dosing Algorithm at www.idph.state.ia.us/ImmTB/Immunization.aspx?prog=Imm&pg=Flu). In order to ensure adequate protection in those children needing two doses of influenza vaccine, it is best to begin vaccinating early in the season.

Once vaccinated, it takes approximately two weeks to develop full immunity against the strains included in the influenza vaccine. In Iowa, influenza outbreaks can begin as early as October and last through March and beyond.

Groups at highest risk of influenza-related complications, such as pneumonia and hospitalization, are those under age 5 years and over age 65 years, pregnant women, those with certain health conditions such as weakened immune system, diabetes, and chronic lung disease. A detailed list of those at high risk for flu-related complications can be found at www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm.

For national recommendations, see Prevention and Control of Influenza with Vaccines: 2012–13 Influenza Season at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6132a3.htm?s_cid=mm6132a3_e.

Binge drinking

Iowa is among the top 10 states for residents reporting binge drinking. A media campaign called 'Stay Classy' has been created to focus on preventing binge drinking among young adults. Those affected by or at risk for binge drinking can be referred to the website www.stayclassyiowa.org. The site was designed to educate young adults

about the dangers of binge drinking and link them to care. The website includes entertaining but educational videos, alcohol quizzes, and contact information for prevention agencies and treatment facilities throughout the state.

For more information about binge drinking, visit www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/binge-drinking.htm.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities
The Iowa Environmental Health Association 2012 Fall Conference will be held in Marshalltown October 23-24.National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) CEUs are available. Information and registration are available at www.ieha.net/.

The 41st Annual Iowa Governor's Safety & Health Conference will be held November 1-2, 2012 in Altoona. Early registration ends October 8. COC credits for CSPs and CM points for CIHs approved, Nursing CEUs are pending. Scholarships for students are available. Information and registration are available at www.iowaworkforce.org/labor/safetyconferenceflyer.pdf.

The 11th Annual Midwest Regional Agricultural Safety & Health (MRASH) Conference will be held in Cedar Rapids November 14-16, 2012.Registration deadline is Friday, November 9, 2012. Nursing CEUs are pending. Information and registration are available at www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash/events/MRASH/2012/index.html.

Have a healthy and happy week! Enjoy the fall colors!
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