

EPI Update for Friday, November 9, 2012
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Rapid flu test results should be interpreted with caution**
- **Mumps testing available at the State Hygienic Laboratory**
- **Recent article on fungal meningitis outbreak**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Rapid flu test results should be interpreted with caution

Several rapid influenza diagnostic tests were recently evaluated using varying concentrations of seasonal influenza virus strains in the specimens. Overall, the rapid flu tests were able to consistently detect the virus in samples with high viral concentrations, but were less likely to be positive in samples with lower concentrations of virus.

These findings suggest that rapid flu test results should be interpreted with caution. Patients with a negative rapid flu test may still have influenza and may require treatment. To maximize validity, rapid flu test specimens should be taken one to three days after symptom onset, when viral concentration is highest. Rapid flu test results should be considered in the context of the patient's symptoms and the current prevalence of flu in the area. To see flu activity in Iowa, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/IdphArchive/Archive.aspx?channel=FluReports.

For more information on the validity of rapid influenza diagnostic tests, visit www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6143a3.htm.

Mumps testing available at the State Hygienic Laboratory

This week IDPH received two reports of clinically diagnosed mumps; however, no laboratory testing was performed in these cases. If healthcare providers suspect mumps, laboratory testing is available at the State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL). SHL provides a highly sensitive and specific PCR assay for mumps testing as well as serology to quickly and accurately detect infection. The test request form and collection instructions may be found at www.shl.uiowa.edu/testmenu/clinicaltestmenu.xml.

Recent article on fungal meningitis outbreak

The Tennessee Department of Health recently published an article in NEJM, discussing their experiences with the ongoing fungal meningitis outbreak. The article is available at www.nejm.org/doi/pdf/10.1056/NEJMoa1212972.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a happy and healthy week!
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