

EPI Update for Friday, March 13, 2015
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Chikungunya update**
- **Flu update**
- **Childhood lead poisoning in Iowa**
- **Iowa Acute Disease Monthly Update**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Chikungunya update

As spring break starts and traveling increases, providers should remind travelers to the Caribbean and other tropical areas to use insect repellent because of the risk from mosquito-borne diseases such as chikungunya. Providers should consider chikungunya viral illness in any returning travelers with acute onset of fever and polyarthralgias.

In 2014, four cases of chikungunya were reported in Iowans: three in travelers returning from affected areas in the Americas and one from the Pacific Islands. No cases of chikungunya have been reported in Iowans so far this year; however, a total of 55 chikungunya cases have been reported from 14 states.

Chikungunya virus RT-PCR test, as well as IgM and IgG antibody assays are available at CDC, a few state health departments (but not at Iowa's State Hygienic Laboratory - SHL), and at least one commercial laboratory. Providers are encouraged to report suspected cases to IDPH to ensure coordination of testing. For more information on chikungunya, visit www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/.

Flu update

Influenza activity is still regional, but continues to decrease in Iowa. As influenza B becomes the predominant strain, IDPH is encouraging providers and laboratories to have their rapid positive flu B confirmed at SHL. Nationally, H3N2 remains the most common strain; but an increase in influenza B viruses has been detected in some areas. For more information on influenza in Iowa, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/Influenza.aspx.

Iowa Acute Disease Monthly Update

The new issue of the Iowa Acute Disease Monthly Update is available by visiting www.idph.state.ia.us/cade/ and scrolling down to 'Reports.' This month's issue can also be accessed directly at www.idph.state.ia.us/IDPHChannelsService/file.ashx?file=9EA6CAED-2E78-44B5-A589-87A91ED9761E.

Childhood lead poisoning in Iowa

Lead poisoning continues to be a serious concern in Iowa's children. Blood lead levels (BLL) greater than 5 micrograms per deciliter (mcg/dL) are considered elevated and

interventions should be taken. For U.S. children aged 1 to 5 years, the mean BLL is 1.3 mcg/dL.

Recently, an Iowa toddler with a BLL of >65 mcg/dL was hospitalized and treated with chelation. Public health inspection of the home, built before 1900, found several lead-based paint hazards, including paint chip debris in a bedroom window trough where the child spent time. In another situation, a toddler was treated for lead poisoning when routine testing found a BLL of 47 mcg/dL. An inspection of the toddler's rental home, built in the early 1900's, found numerous lead-based paint hazards, including window troughs and sills with bite marks.

Children at high risk and between 1 and 4 years of age should have BLL routinely tested - at least annually. Children at high risk are those who live or spend time in housing built before 1978, or have other exposure to lead. Children's risk can increase when they become more mobile and can access areas where lead based paint may be present, such as porches, windows, and outdoor areas near the foundation of houses.

For information on the 2014 IDPH recommendations for lead screening and follow-up testing, as well as the updated brochure "Lead Poisoning – How to Protect Iowa Families," visit www.idph.state.ia.us/LPP/Default.aspx or call 800-972-2026 to speak to a child lead poisoning specialist.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

SAVE the DATE - 39th Iowa Infection Prevention and Control Seminar - May 5-6. Topics will include patient safety and issues relative to infection prevention.

Have a healthy and happy week!

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