

EPI Update for Friday, May 1, 2015
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Avian influenza**
- **Canine influenza**
- **Spice, K2, fake pot - dangerous, deadly chemicals**
- **Rubella eliminated from the Americas**
- **Worker deaths in Iowa**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Avian influenza

IDPH and local public health partners continue to monitor workers who had direct contact with birds infected with avian influenza H5N2. This strain of avian influenza has not caused human illness and is not transmitted via food. For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h5/index.htm.

Canine influenza

Canine influenza A(H3N2) is currently causing an outbreak of “dog flu” in the Chicago area, and a possible case has been reported in Iowa. This H3N2 variant may have been originated in Asia. Symptoms in dogs include cough, runny nose, fever, lethargy, loss of appetite, and pneumonia; however, not all infected dogs will become ill. The fatality rate is less than 10 percent and most dogs recover in two to three weeks.

Two canine influenza viruses have been identified worldwide: influenza A(H3N8) virus and A(H3N2) virus. Almost all dogs are susceptible to infection with these canine influenza viruses and illness can be easily spread in kennels and shelters. A canine vaccine for A(H3N8) has been available in the U.S. since 2009, but it may not protect against A(H3N2).

No human infections have ever been reported.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/flu/news/canine-influenza-update.htm or www.avma.org/KB/Resources/FAQs/Pages/Control-of-Canine-Influenza-in-Dogs.aspx.

Spice, K2, fake pot - dangerous, deadly chemicals

In the past few weeks, there has been a nationwide increase in news reports of hospitalizations and deaths caused by synthetic cannabinoids, including the death of an 18-year-old from Sioux City, Iowa. The American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) reported that from January 1, 2015 through April 29, 2015, poison centers across the United States have received 2,365 calls from health care providers and the public seeking help for adverse reactions to these drugs; 1,464 of these calls were in April alone. In comparison, a total of 3,680 exposure calls for synthetic cannabinoids was received during the entire calendar year 2014.

Synthetic cannabinoids are potent laboratory chemicals that were never intended to be used by humans to get high. Known as K2, Spice, fake pot, synthetic marijuana, “incense,” and “potpourri,” these seemingly innocuous names fail to convey the serious consequences that can result from smoking, ingesting or injecting these chemicals.

The symptoms caused by these laboratory chemicals include increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, elevated temperature, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, disorientation, confusion,

agitation, psychosis, panic attacks, paranoia, anxiety, seizures, coma and death. Persons have become violent, combative, homicidal, suicidal and self-destructive when using these chemicals.

If you have questions about synthetic cannabinoids or think someone has taken them, contact the Iowa Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Rubella eliminated from the Americas

On April 29th, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that rubella has been eliminated from the Americas. The last rubella outbreak in Iowa occurred in 1999, with 30 cases. Since then, only two cases of rubella have been reported in Iowa, in 2001 and 2013.

For more information about the elimination of rubella in the Americas, visit www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=10798%3AAmericas-free-of-rubella&catid=740%3Anews-press-releases&Itemid=1926&lang=en.

Worker deaths in Iowa

April 28 was the annual Workers Memorial Day. IDPH's *Occupational Health and Safety Surveillance Program Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation* (FACE) project has documented a total of 78 traumatic work-related fatalities in Iowa in 2014, with another nine deaths pending confirmation of work involvement. For more information about the FACE program, visit www.public-health.uiowa.edu/face/.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 97 fatal occupational injuries in Iowa in 2012 (rate of 6.6/100,000 FTE workers), and 72 deaths in Iowa for 2013 (4.7/100,000 workers). While this national data shows a significant short-term decline, the preliminary 2014 FACE data shows an increase. All Iowans need safe and healthy workplaces.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy week!

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