

Epi Update for Friday, September 9, 2016 Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE) Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **West Nile virus update**
- **Sri Lanka declared malaria-free**
- **New handwashing posters available from CDC**
- **Infographic: Handwashing Princess poster**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

West Nile virus update

Since the end of July, three confirmed cases of human West Nile virus (WNV) have been reported and additional cases are currently being investigated. Statewide surveillance has also detected six infected horses and five infected mosquito pools in Iowa. To date, WNV has been found in either humans, animals or mosquitoes in Crawford, Johnson, Lyon, Polk, Pottawattamie, Sioux, Story, Tama, Washington, Webster, and Woodbury counties. For more information on WNV activity in Iowa, visit the current surveillance data section of idph.iowa.gov/cade/disease-information/west-nile-virus.

West Nile virus activity typically peaks right now - in late summer and early fall. Individuals are encouraged to prevent mosquito bites by wearing mosquito repellent, especially during times of peak mosquito activity between dusk and dawn.

Sri Lanka declared malaria-free

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Sri Lanka free of malaria. In the past, this Indian Ocean Island was one of the most affected nations in the world, making this a remarkable public health achievement. Sri Lanka has not had any locally-transmitted cases of malaria in three and one half years. WHO attributed this country's success to a strategy that included mobile clinics, boosting public health awareness, and intensively targeting the parasite and malaria-carrying mosquitoes. Mobile clinics in rural areas where transmission is high provided prompt and effective treatment. This reduced the parasite reservoir and the possibility of further transmission. WHO is working with Sri Lanka to maintain surveillance and screen travelers so that the parasite is not re-introduced to the island.

New handwashing posters available from CDC

Handwashing is a 'do-it-yourself' way to avoid getting sick and prevent the spread of germs – especially by people who are ill with diarrhea and respiratory diseases. Handwashing is especially important after using the bathroom, before preparing food, and when caring for patients.

CDC is promoting handwashing with the message 'Clean Hands Save Lives', and has created posters that are available to print and hang in offices and bathrooms (some target elementary school children). To see the posters, visit www.cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html.

Infographic: Handwashing Princess poster



Infographic available at
www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/hispanic_princess_handwashing_poster_8x11.pdf.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy week!

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