

EPI Update for Friday, January 26, 2018
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Significant influenza activity in long-term care facilities, schools**
- **Influenza B is circulating too, and is covered by vaccine**
- **Poison control in Iowa receiving calls about Tide Pod challenge**
- **Falls prevention resources - risk increases with icy conditions**
- **In the news: Opioid addiction: Perspective from a father, clinician and educator**
- **In the news: We may finally know the cause of polio-like illness paralyzing children around the world**
- **Infographic: Winterize to prevent falls**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Significant influenza activity in long-term care facilities, schools

So far this season, 48 influenza outbreaks have been reported by long-term care facilities in Iowa. Twelve of these outbreaks began in the last two weeks. Among the outbreaks for which subtyping is available, influenza A(H3) was detected for 31 outbreaks, influenza B Yamagata lineage was identified for two, and influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 was identified for one. IDPH provides information about influenza in long-term care facilities, including CDC guidance for outbreak management, at idph.iowa.gov/influenza/ltc-facilities.

Schools from all regions in the state have reported 10 percent absenteeism recently, with 40 different schools reporting at least once last week. These reports include absences due to illness of any type, but respiratory symptoms were reported most frequently by the majority of schools and many of the schools specifically reported students diagnosed with influenza. For more information about influenza in schools, visit idph.iowa.gov/influenza/schools.

Influenza B is circulating too, and is covered by vaccine

Although over 80 percent of positive rapid influenza test results reported in Iowa this season have been for influenza A, the number and percentage of positive influenza B test results has been slowly increasing since December. Last week, clinical laboratories around Iowa reported 225 influenza B rapid test results, representing 5 percent of all rapid tests reported. All specimens submitted to SHL so far this season that confirmed as influenza B have subtyped as Yamagata lineage.

Those 6 months of age and older should receive an influenza vaccine every year to help reduce the chance of illness and complications from influenza. Influenza vaccine provides protection from two subtypes of influenza A (H3N2 and H1N1) and one or two strains of influenza B, depending on the vaccine given. Trivalent influenza vaccines have a component to protect against influenza B Victoria

lineage and quadrivalent vaccines include both Victoria and Yamagata lineage components.

IDPH tracks influenza subtyping in our weekly influenza report, available at idph.iowa.gov/influenza/reports.

Poison control in Iowa receiving calls about Tide Pod challenge

Millions of viewers have recently encountered the “Tide Pod Challenge” on the internet, in which someone posts a video of themselves biting into a laundry detergent pod. The primary risks for teens and adults from the concentrated detergent include chemical burns to the mouth, throat and upper airway, and vomiting or diarrhea if swallowed. Exposure can be life-threatening, especially for toddlers.

Through mid-January, the Iowa Statewide Poison Control Center had received five calls for this exposure - four involving teenagers and one involving an adult. The American Association of Poison Control Centers reported 86 cases nationally in the first three weeks of 2018. Health care providers with questions about the risk of exposure or treatment protocols for cases of suspected laundry packet misuse can call the Poison Help hotline at 800-222-1222. Poison control experts are available 24/7 free of charge.

Falls prevention resources - risk increases with icy conditions

Throughout the year, falls are a significant hazard for older adults and those with disabilities and icy outdoor conditions can be especially dangerous. There are several steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of falls due to icy conditions. Some ideas include proper selection of footwear, using flashlights and carrying kitty litter to distribute onto icy surfaces prior to walking on them. Screening tools for falls risk are available for older adults and there are many evidence-based falls prevention resources available.

For more information on falls prevention, visit www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/.

In the news: Opioid addiction: Perspective from a father, clinician and educator

www.ada.org/en/publications/ada-news/viewpoint/my-view/2018/january/opioid-addiction

In the news: We may finally know the cause of polio-like illness paralysing children around the world

sciencealert.com/mysterious-polio-like-illness-paralyses-children-cause-enterovirus-d68-acute-flaccid-myelitis

Infographic: Winterize to prevent falls


Winterize to Prevent Falls

Below are five simple steps that YOU can take today to reduce falls among older adults and adults with disabilities in your community.

- 1** **Raise awareness**
Post and share this simple and colorful infographic—[5 Steps to Prevent a Fall](#)—from the National Council on Aging.
- 2** **“Winterize” shoes, boots, and assistive devices**
 - Attach spikeless ice and snow shoe gripper sole covers to shoes for extra stability when walking on slippery surfaces. Look for these at sporting goods stores.
 - Attach an ice gripper cane tip that has spikes on the bottom to penetrate the ice and secure a firm grip. Ice grip tips can be purchased online.
 - Choose winter shoes with rubber soles to maintain traction on slippery surfaces.
 - Try this inexpensive way to make [wheelchair snow tires](#).
- 3** **Carry kitty litter for slick surfaces**
Encourage older adults to [carry a zip top bag filled with a lightweight kitty litter](#) in their pocket and cast it out ahead of themselves on slick surfaces.
- 4** **Screen older adults for fall risk**
Health care providers: begin to check ALL older adults with the STEADI fall risk screening tool as part of your normal intake and reevaluation process. Learn more about administering the [STEADI screen](#) and using [evidence-based falls prevention programs](#) in your community.
- 5** **Give the gift of falls prevention**
Encourage adult children to give fall-proofing gifts to their parents:
 - Fall alarm systems that are motion triggered without hitting a button
 - Higher toilets in the home
 - Replace multifocal glasses with single vision eyeglass lenses
 - Grab bars in bathroom and next to outside steps or inside thresholds
 - Install firm stair railings on both sides of stairways and set automatic lights over stairways and by outside entrances
 - Cover the entryway to the home and provide a table to set down bags while finding keys
 - Shorter days mean more time in the dark—give tiny flashlights to attach to keys, hats, and coat buttons

Help make this season a safe, warm, and wonderful one for your patients, family, and community!

Source: Marilyn Orman Reefes, PT, PhD, DPT, Chair, American Physical Therapy Association’s AGPT Balance & Falls SIG; Lead, Montana’s Falls Free Coalition; University of Montana Rural Institute/MontTECH programs.


National Council on Aging

To view in full size, visit www.ncoa.org/resources/winterize-to-prevent-falls/.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy week!

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