

EPI Update for Friday, December 31, 2004
Center For Acute Disease Epidemiology
Iowa Department of Public Health

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- Influenza Update: For the week-ending December 25, 2004 (Week 51)
- Wisconsin Teenager Recovering from Rabies
- Updated: Rabies Vaccine and Immune Globulin Centers December 2004
- Prepare Your Home for Winter
- Winter Survival Kit for Your Home

Influenza Update: For the week-ending December 25, 2004 (Week 51)

Iowa is seeing increases in the influenza activity. The current level is categorized as "local" influenza activity. Sentinel providers in the eastern part of the state are seeing an increase in influenza-like illness in patients, and have isolated influenza virus within the past three weeks. The University Hygienic Laboratory has confirmed both influenza A - H3N2 and influenza B in the Iowa. Currently both the influenza A and B isolates from Iowa appear to be similar to the strains contained in this year's vaccine.

For the latest influenza information including an updated Iowa influenza activity map, Iowa Week 50 influenza surveillance report, influenza prevention materials, and the latest guidelines for use of the influenza vaccine visit the Iowa Department of Public Health's influenza web site at <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp>

Wisconsin Teenager Recovering from Rabies

The CDC has just released an MMWR article providing details about a Wisconsin teenager recovering from rabies. She is the sixth person known to have recovered from rabies after the onset of clinical signs.

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5350a1.htm>

This person is unique because she is the first to recover without being treated with rabies immune globulin and vaccine (either before or after the onset of illness). Currently, only five patients have recovered from rabies after the onset of illness, and had either been vaccinated or received some form of rabies post exposure treatment before the onset of illness. In addition she is the only one of the five patients who recovered without neurological damage. Otherwise, the mortality rate among previously unvaccinated rabies patients has been 100 percent.

Rabies in humans is preventable with avoidance of animals, and after an exposure with proper wound care and timely and appropriate administration of post exposure treatment before the onset of clinical disease. To contact IDPH - Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE) staff for consultation on rabies exposure and post exposure treatment during normal business hours call: 515-242-5935 (CADE general information) or 515-281-4933 (Dr. Susan Brockus, State Public Health Veterinarian). After hours, please call the CADE Disease reporting hotline: 1-800-362-2736

The following flow charts are available on the IDPH web site and are very helpful to assess whether a person has had a rabies exposure and needs post exposure treatment:

http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/rabies_exposure_all_animals.pdf

http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/rabies_exposure_bats.pdf

Updated: Rabies Vaccine and Immune Globulin Centers December 2004

IDPH *has updated* the list/directory of health care facilities and pharmacies in and around Iowa that serve as rabies vaccine and immune globulin centers. Now IDPH is making it available as a reference document to clinicians. IDPH has placed the update within the Rabies Chapter of the EPI Manual. The new list is available at:

http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/cade_content/epi_manual/rabies.pdf

Prepare Your Home for Winter

Periods of extreme cold cannot always be predicted far in advance, but we know that in Iowa weather can turn cold and blizzards do happen. So now is the time to prepare your home and check you emergency supplies.

If you plan to use a fireplace or wood stove for emergency heating, have your chimney or flue inspected each year. Ask your local fire department to recommend an inspector, or find one in the yellow pages of your telephone directory under “chimney cleaning.”

Also, if you’ll be using a fireplace, wood stove, or kerosene heater, install a smoke detector and a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector near the area to be heated. Test them monthly, and replace batteries twice yearly.

Insulate any water pipes that run along exterior walls so they will be less likely to freeze. To the extent possible, weatherproof your home by adding weather-stripping, insulation, insulated doors and storm windows, or thermal-pane windows.

If you have pets, bring them indoors. If you cannot bring them inside, provide adequate shelter to keep them warm and make sure that they have access to unfrozen water.

Emergency Supplies List:

- Have an alternate way to heat your home during a power failure
- Dry firewood for a fireplace or wood stove, or
- Kerosene for a kerosene heater
- Furnace fuel (coal, propane, or oil)
- Blankets
- Matches
- Multipurpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher
- First aid kit and instruction manual
- Flashlight or battery-powered lantern
- Battery-powered radio
- Battery-powered clock or watch
- Extra batteries
- Non-electric can opener
- Snow shovel

Rock salt

Special needs items (diapers, hearing aid batteries, medications, etc.)

Winter Survival Kit for Your Home

Keep several days' supply of these items:

Food that needs no cooking or refrigeration, such as bread, crackers, cereal, canned foods, and dried fruits. Remember baby food and formula if you need it for young children.

Water stored in clean containers, or purchased bottled water (5 gallons per person) in case your water pipes freeze or rupture.

Medicines that any family member may need.

If your area is prone to long periods of cold temperatures, or if your home is isolated, stock additional amounts of food, water, and medicine.

Have a Healthy and Happy New Year...

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800-362-2736