

EPI Update for Friday November 18, 2005

Center For Acute Disease Epidemiology

Iowa Department of Public Health

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Influenza update**
- **Talking turkey again**
- **Influenza rapid test's positive predictive value**

Trainings

- **When Antibiotics Don't Work (Registration Link)**
- **New Training Program Opportunity in Occupational Epidemiology**

Influenza update

Seasonal flu

Levels of influenza-like illness in Iowa remain below the baseline for sentinel providers, schools, child care centers and long term care facilities. No cases of influenza have been confirmed in Iowa. South Dakota remains the only neighboring state reporting influenza activity. *For more information on influenza or to view our activity reports*, visit our website at www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp <<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp>>, or the CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/flu/ <<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>>.

Avian influenza

Avian influenza A(H5N1) human and bird activity has been confirmed in China, where recent outbreaks of avian influenza among birds have been reported in seven provinces. WHO is working with Chinese health officials on expanding surveillance for additional human cases. Two other potential cases are currently being investigated. For the most up-to-date information, visit WHO's website on avian influenza at www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/ <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/>.

Pandemic influenza planning efforts

The Iowa Department of Public Health held two ICN seminars on pandemic influenza on Wednesday, Nov. 16th. If you would like notes from the sessions, they are available on our website at <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu_icn.asp>.

Talking turkey again

Turkey is truly America's meat. Fossils have proven that wild turkeys have been part of North America for more than 10 million years! There were seven varieties of wild turkeys in America when Europeans first arrived over 500 years ago, and all seven varieties still exist in the wild today. But in the past 50 years domestic turkeys have turned wild. The preparation and roasting of whole birds, however, is the same. Here is some sage advice [pun intended] on preparing turkey that assures a safe holiday meal:

Wash hands, before, during, and after• working with raw turkey!

Keep• cutting boards and utensils washed and rinsed, especially after contact with raw, uncooked meat.

Use a meat• thermometer and check that a meat temperature of at least 180 degrees and a stuffing temperature of 165 degrees (especially if inside the turkey) are reached.

Thaw turkey in a refrigerator or a• microwave oven, not on the kitchen table.
Promptly store leftovers in a refrigerator.●

More detailed information on turkey preparation can be found at
<http://www.eatturkey.com/press/main.html>.

Influenza rapid test's positive predictive value

Currently, there are no reports of influenza virus activity in Iowa, and during times of no or low activity, a rapid influenza test result is not sufficient to determine if a person has the flu since the rapid influenza tests are not reliable until the flu is present in the community. In short, a positive rapid test result today is probably a false positive; in other words, it probably has a low positive predicative value. To determine if the positive rapid test result is a **true** positive, a virus culture and PCR test should be performed at the University Hygienic Lab (UHL).

The FDA's "Cautions in Using Rapid Tests for Detecting Influenza A Viruses" was posted on Nov. 14 (<<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/oivd/tips/rapidflu.html>>). The FDA recommends that clinicians use their clinical experience, confirmatory laboratory testing, and state and local public health surveillance information (about circulating influenza strains and the current level of influenza activity), along with an understanding of the limitations of these rapid tests to assess the possibility of the flu. UHL has shipped transport media to laboratories across Iowa to use to confirm a positive rapid test result with virus culture and PCR testing. For further information regarding confirmatory testing of a rapid influenza test, contact UHL at 319-335-4500.

Upcoming trainings

Iowa's Antibiotic Resistance Training: When Antibiotics Don't Work

Registration is now open for the Iowa Antibiotic Resistance Task Force's free teleconference on Dec. 14 from noon to 1:00 p.m., titled “**When Antibiotics Don't Work.**” Topics that will be covered include: 1) antibiotic resistance surveillance in Iowa and what it tells you; 2) decreasing antibiotic resistance through patient education; and 3) community acquired MRSA. You can register by phone, fax, or mail. **The deadline is Dec. 6th.** Please visit http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/cade/teleconf_reg.pdf for registration form and information.

New Training Program Opportunity in Occupational Epidemiology

To meet the growing demand for trained specialists who focus on work-related patterns of disease and illness, a new Occupational Epidemiology Training Program (OETP), based in the University of Iowa (UI) College of Public Health has been established. For more information about the OETP fellowships, including degree requirements and financial support, visit <http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/heartland/OETP.htm>, or contact the training program director, Dr. Bill Field at 319-335-4413 or bill-field@uiowa.edu.