

EPI Update for Friday December 2, 2005
Center For Acute Disease Epidemiology
Iowa Department of Public Health

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- • Influenza update
- • Confirmatory testing and reporting of seasonal influenza
- • Tips for healthy and safe holidays: managing stress
- • Winter weather is here: what you need to know about hypothermia
- • World Aids Day, December 1
- • The "Iowa Antibiotic Resistance Task Force: A Public Health Guide," 2nd edition fall 2004
- • Meetings and announcements

Influenza update

Seasonal Influenza

Several neighboring states are reporting influenza activity including Minnesota and South Dakota. Influenza-like illness reported by participants in the Iowa Influenza Surveillance Network (IISN) remains below the baseline. For more information on the IISN, visit our Web site at <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/iisn.asp>.

Avian Influenza

Avian activity continues in several provinces in China. There have been only 3 confirmed cases in China and surveillance officers have begun screening villages where cases occur for influenza-like illness. As of Nov. 29th, WHO reports 133 cases of H5N1 including 68 deaths. For the most up-to-date information, visit WHO's Web site on avian influenza at www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/.

Pandemic influenza planning efforts

The responses to questions submitted in regards to the Pandemic Influenza ICN are now posted on our Web site at http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu_icn.asp.

Confirmatory testing and reporting of seasonal influenza

We have NOT had a confirmed positive laboratory result for influenza yet this year. This means that the test results from rapid flu tests are giving false positives.

To provide the most accurate test results, we recommend that health care providers submit specimens to UHL in the following cases:

- • The patient has influenza-like illness (fever >100°F and cough and/or sore throat)
- • Rapid flu test, positive or negative

Test collection tips:

- • Tests for influenza should be collected within three days of onset of symptoms.
- • Specimens must be in viral (M4) transport medium.
- • Refrigerate specimen at 2-8°C immediately after collection and ship cold.

For complete specimen collection instructions, go to:

www.uhl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/respiratory%20VID%20Collection%20Instructions.pdf

For the UHL Respiratory Disease Test Request Form, go to:

www.uhl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/RespiratoryRequestForm.pdf

For test request forms and kits call: (319) 335-4466

Tips for healthy and safe holidays: managing stress

The holiday season can create even more stress in our lives, and prolonged stress can have serious physical and emotional consequences, it is becoming increasingly important to minimize and manage stress in healthy ways. So here is some sage advice from IDPH-CADE to help you through the rest of the holiday season:

- Eat nutritious meals: Enjoy holiday treats in moderation; don't give in to stress-driven urges and eat too many sweets.
- Get enough sleep: If you have trouble sleeping or wake up during the night, try to make time for a nap during the day to make up for lost sleep.
- Exercise regularly: Try to find a “buddy” to exercise with - it will help keep you motivated.
- If you are depressed, get treatment: If you have symptoms of depression (extreme sadness, difficulty concentrating, apathy, hopelessness, thoughts about death), see a healthcare provider right away. Depression is an illness and can be treated.
- • Maintain friendships and social contacts: Isolation increases stress and can also contribute to depression.
- • Take time to unwind and be good to yourself. Keep doing things you enjoy such as reading, walking, listening to music.

For more information on managing stress during the holidays visit the Department of Social and Health Services Web site at

<http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/topics/caregiving/holidays.htm>

Winter weather is here: what you need to know about hypothermia

Hypothermia (an abnormally low body temperature) occurs when a person is exposed to cold temperatures and his/her body loses heat faster than it can be produced. When one's body temperature is too low, brain and body functions slow down. As a result, hypothermia is very dangerous because those affected may not realize it is happening and may not be able to do anything about it.

Hypothermia usually occurs when one is exposed to very cold environmental temperatures, but can also occur even at "cool" temperatures (above 40°F) if one becomes cold from rain or perspiration, or is submerged in cold water.

Persons who are most at risk for hypothermia include:

- Elderly who do not have adequate food, clothing or heating
- Unattended children and babies sleeping in cold bedrooms
- Persons impaired from drinking alcohol
- The mentally ill
- Persons who remain outdoors for extended periods of time – homeless persons, hikers, hunters, etc.

The warning signs for hypothermia for adults include shivering / exhaustion; confusion / loss of dexterity in hands; memory loss; slurred speech; and drowsiness. For infants the warning signs are more limited and include lethargy / very low energy; and bright red, but cold skin.

If you notice signs of hypothermia with yourself or someone else, get the person affected into a warm place immediately and give them warm liquids. If symptoms are serious, or if minor symptoms persist, seek immediate medical attention.

For more information on hypothermia and other winter weather health concerns, visit CDC's Web site at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/faq.asp#what>

World Aids Day, December 1

Dec. 1st marked the 18th observance of World AIDS Day. This annual worldwide event was established in 1988 to increase awareness and education about human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). The 2005 World AIDS Day theme in the United States, "Action Makes a Difference," addresses the importance of prevention, testing, treatment, and care

programs for persons at risk for or living with HIV/AIDS. Are you aware of the following facts?

- • At the end of 2003, more than 1 million persons were estimated to be living in the United States with HIV infection.
- • Approximately one fourth of these persons were believed to be unaware of their infections.
- • Recent data from 33 states indicates that HIV/AIDS diagnoses continue to disproportionately impact non-Hispanic blacks and men who have sex with men regardless of race.

Additional information about World AIDS Day is available at <http://www.worldaidscampaign.info>

Information regarding other U.S. HIV/AIDS observances is available at <http://www.omhrc.gov/hivaidsobservances/index.html>

Information on the AIDS pandemic is available from the Joint United Nations Program on AIDS at <http://www.unaids.org>

The “Iowa Antibiotic Resistance Task Force: A Public Health Guide,” 2nd edition fall 2004

The new and improved antibiotic resistance report is still available on IDPH’s Web page. (Note URL change). This report contains recommendations for the care of patients or persons either infected or colonized with multiple resistant organisms. The recommendations address patients in multiple settings, including primary care, acute care/hospitals, long term care, home care, hospice care, hemodialysis centers, schools, child care centers and the community.

<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/cade/antibioticreport.pdf>

Meeting Announcements and Training Opportunities

The laboratory’s role in pandemic preparedness and response:

The National Laboratory Training network is pleased to announce a free 90-minute teleconference: "Influenza 2005: The Laboratory's Role in Pandemic Preparedness and Response" on Tuesday Dec. 6, 2005. NLTN once again welcomes speakers Ms. Carol Kirk and Dr. Peter Shult, virologists at the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene, in Madison, Wisconsin. To view the course brochure go to www.phppo.cdc.gov/nltm/nltm_cal.aspx.cdc.gov/nltm/nltm_cal.aspx and to register for the program go to www.nltm.org/courses.

Times*: * Please note your time zone

| Zone | Time |
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| Eastern | 2:00 - 3:30 pm |
| Central | 1:00 - 2:30 pm |
| Mountain | 12:00 - 1:30 pm |
| Pacific | 11:00 - 12:30 pm |

The Upper Midwest Center for Public Health Preparedness is offering a grand rounds program titled “The Role of Blood Centers in Emergency Response” on Friday, Dec. 9th from noon to 1 p.m. For more information and registration, please visit the Web site at http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icphp/grand_rounds/current_session/.

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

Have you registered? Don’t miss out! Registration is still open

You can participate via telephone at your desk and there is no charge (big hint).

Topics include:

“Antibiotic Resistance Surveillance Across the Land – With an Iowa Perspective”

Mary DeMartino, B.S., MT, SM (ASCP)

“Decreasing Antimicrobial Resistance Through Patient Education”

John Olds, M.D.

“Community-Acquired MRSA”

Loreen Herwaldt, M.D.

“Glimpse into the Future”

James Young, M.D.

www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/cade/teleconf_flyer.pdf

www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/cade/teleconf_reg.pdf

Have a healthy and happy week

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