

EPI Update for Friday, October 19, 2007
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)**
- **Report to the nation on the status of cancer**
- **Pandemic Influenza: Warning, Children At-Risk**
- **Test your knowledge: Chronology of a rare disease investigation**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)

Staphylococcus, often referred to simply as "staph," are a group of bacteria often carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. Staph bacteria can cause serious infections (such as surgical wound infections, skin infections, bloodstream infections, and pneumonia). MRSA is a type of *Staphylococcus aureus* that is resistant to methicillin (and other related antibiotics).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that the incidence rate for invasive MRSA in the United States is 31.8 per 100,000 population. According to the Iowa surveillance system, the incidence rate is 10 per 100,000 in Iowa.

Settings in which there is close contact between multiple people increase the risk of MRSA transmission. Transmission of MRSA has been reported among those in correctional facilities, hospitals, long-term care facilities, and among competitive sports participants and child care attendees.

To prevent infection with MRSA, you can do the following:

- Wash hands regularly
- Cover all draining wounds
- Health care workers should learn about local resistance patterns to ensure appropriate antibiotic therapy
- Do not to share personal items
- Clean sports equipment immediately after use

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_invasive_FS.html.

Report to the nation on the status of cancer

A new report from the nation's leading cancer organizations shows cancer death rates decreased an average of 2.1 percent per year from 2002 to 2004. This is nearly twice the annual decrease of 1.1 percent per year from 1993 to 2002. Death rates decreased for the majority of the top 15 cancers in men and women.

Important declines were noted for the three leading causes of cancer deaths in men: lung, prostate and colorectal.

The study was conducted by the CDC, the American Cancer Society, the National Cancer Institute, and the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries, in collaboration with the Indian Health Service and Mayo Clinic College of Medicine. The report is now available online and will appear in the Nov. 15 issue of the journal *Cancer*.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/Features/CancerReport.

Pandemic Influenza: Warning, Children At-Risk

The American Academy of Pediatrics and Trust for America's Health recently issued a report called "Pandemic Influenza: Warning, Children At-Risk," which finds that children and teens between the ages of 0-19 have accounted for nearly 46 percent of all H5N1 "bird flu" deaths. The report also identifies gaps in U.S. preparedness for treating and caring for children during a possible pandemic flu outbreak.

Four key areas of concern raised in the report include:

- Child-appropriate doses of vaccine and medications
- Management and treatment of children who become ill
- Including children in strategies to slow the spread of influenza in communities
- Caring for and supervising the health of children if schools and childcare facilities are closed for extended periods of time

For more information, visit

<http://healthyamericans.org/reports/fluchildren/KidsPandemicFlu.pdf>.

Test your knowledge: Chronology of a rare disease investigation

This is the first in a 3-part series.

Part I

A 4-month old female presented with several days of coughing, generalized weakness, poor feeding, floppy head and droopy eyes. The infant was treated with steroids and sent home.

The next day the infant was admitted to the hospital because of constipation (longer than 2 weeks), generalized weakness, and poor feeding. Two days later the infant was transferred to the pediatric intensive care unit. The infant required a feeding tube to supplement feedings, but never required a mechanical respiratory support. The infant had been exclusively breastfed and never had a pacifier or other food items.

What disease do you think this infant has?

(Answer will be in next week's update)

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

Upper Respiratory Infections - Antibiotics or Not
Tuesday, October 30, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

This teleconference will be presented by the Iowa Antibiotic Resistance Task Force and is intended for physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners who prescribe antibiotics. It will discuss the diagnosis and management of upper respiratory infections. For a teleconference flyer and to register, visit:

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

Flu Fundamentals for Health Care Providers: Focus on Iowa Surveillance
Tuesday, October 23, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., CST

Registration Deadline:

Friday, October 19, 2007

Flu Fundamentals for Schools: Focus on Prevention and Intervention
Tuesday, October 30, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., CST

Registration Deadline:

Friday, October 26, 2007

Flu Fundamentals for Laboratories: Focus on Diagnosis and Testing
Tuesday, November 6, 2007, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., CST

For more information, visit

www.uhl.uiowa.edu/educationoutreach/conferencesevents/influenza.

Have a healthy and happy week!

Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology

Iowa Department of Public Health

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