

**EPI Update for Friday, November 16, 2007**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Four influenza cases start the 2007-2008 season**
  
- **Update on STEC investigations**
- **New IDPH Antibiotic Resistance Web page**
- **Schools are encouraged to report absenteeism**
- **Vaccines cut vaccine-preventable deaths by 99 percent**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

**Four influenza cases start the 2007-2008 season**

This week, the Iowa Department of Public Health received four reports of laboratory-confirmed influenza. Two cases are under the age of 1, and at least two were reported as being hospitalized and released. There have been no reported deaths. All four influenza viruses were identified as type A; tests confirming the strains are pending. IDPH emphasizes the importance of vaccination at this time, especially with the holidays approaching. Early indicators suggest that this year might be especially hard on children. Thus school age children are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated along with the very young and the elderly, people who have chronic health conditions and people who are immunocompromised.

For more information on influenza or influenza vaccination visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp).

**Update on STEC investigations**

A national outbreak investigation of *E. coli* O157:H7 that appears to be associated with consumption of Totino's and Jeni's brand frozen pizzas containing pepperoni topping is ongoing. A total of 21 laboratory-confirmed cases of *E. coli* O157:H7 in 10 states have been identified and are potentially linked with this outbreak. There are currently no cases in Iowa confirmed as linked to this outbreak, but one Iowa investigation is ongoing.

As a result of the possible contamination, General Mills, the parent company of Totino's and Jeni's brand products, has issued a voluntary recall of 414,000 cases of pizza products. The company is working closely with federal officials and state health departments to identify potential problems.

For more information about the recall, visit [www.generalmills.com/corporate/media\\_center/news\\_release\\_detail.aspx?itemID=29007&catID=227](http://www.generalmills.com/corporate/media_center/news_release_detail.aspx?itemID=29007&catID=227).

### **New IDPH Antibiotic Resistance Web page**

Recently, the media has covered the issue of antibiotic resistant infections. Now there is a new education tool available from IDPH – the Antibiotic Resistance Web page. Available at [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/antibiotic\\_resistance.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/antibiotic_resistance.asp), the page contains information for both the public and health care providers. Of special interest is the “Iowa Gets Smart – Know When Antibiotics Work” materials and curriculum developed for school nurses. The presentation and supporting materials target parents of school-aged children ages 14 and younger.

The Web page also contains a link to the Iowa Antibiotic Resistance Task Force Report, which contains guidelines for control methods for a variety of situations, antibiotic use, laboratory data, and control measures. Slide presentations from task force member’s lectures are also available.

### **Schools are encouraged to report absenteeism**

As the influenza season gets going, CADE asks that all schools report any day when the amount of student absenteeism exceed 10 percent. Schools located in separate buildings should report separately. If absenteeism exceeds 10 percent for several consecutive days, one aggregated report can be sent.

Reports should include the following:

- Reporter’s name and contact information
- School and school address
- Number of students absent due to illness and total enrollment
- Symptoms of illness reported
- Dates absenteeism exceeded 10%

The report form is available at [http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/iowa\\_school\\_absenteeism.pdf](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/iowa_school_absenteeism.pdf) .

If you have questions, contact Meghan Harris at [mharris@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:mharris@idph.state.ia.us).

### **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

None.

**Have a healthy and happy week!**  
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