

**EPI Update for Friday, January 16, 2009**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Protect yourself from frostbite this winter**
- **Measles exposure in Iowa resident**
- **Influenza starting to increase**
- **Update National *Salmonella* Typhimurium cluster**
- **Reportable disease reminder**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

**Protect yourself from frostbite this winter**

With the very cold weather occurring in Iowa, precautions need to be taken against cold weather injury; exposed skin could freeze within 10 minutes. It is best to stay inside if possible, but if you must be outdoors during these extreme conditions, cover all skin, including hands, head and ears, neck and face.

Frostbite most often affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes and can permanently damage the skin, causing scarring and severe cases can lead to amputation. Signs of frostbite include a white or grayish-yellow skin area, skin that feels unusually firm or waxy, or numbness. A person is often unaware of frostbite until someone else points it out because the frozen tissues are numb.

If signs of frostbite occur, go into a warm place immediately. Warm up frozen/chilled skin by pressing against normal temperature skin (put fingers in armpits). Do not massage frozen/chilled skin, do not rub with snow, or place hot items against skin as this could cause more damage. Seek medical attention if skin does not quickly return to normal color or pain occurs and continues.

More information on frostbite can be found at [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/winter\\_weather/frostbite\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/winter_weather/frostbite_factsheet.pdf).

**Measles exposure in Iowa resident**

Recently, an Iowa resident was potentially exposed to measles during a visit to an ER in another state. A 7 month old baby from Great Britain with fever, cough, and rash later confirmed to be measles was also being seen in the ER. Unfortunately, measles was not suspected in this child until the last of the three visits to medical care. The Iowa resident, who is mildly ill with symptoms somewhat inconsistent with measles, is currently quarantined in that state awaiting blood testing for current disease (IgM) or immunity (IgG).

Since measles is an acute, highly communicable serious viral disease, it is considered a public health emergency. Measles is so infectious that walking into a room that a measles patient left two hours prior can still result in exposure to measles. It is characterized clinically by fever, cough, coryza, conjunctivitis, and rash (remember three C's and a rash is measles until proved otherwise). Serious complications include

pneumonia, encephalitis, and death. Laboratory diagnosis includes polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and serologic tests for measles IgM. Measles vaccine is a live, attenuated vaccine and is the first "M" in the MMR vaccine. Two doses are required for school entry.

If you suspect a person has measles, immediately report this to your local public health department and IDPH at (800) 362-2736.

For more information, please visit: [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/measles.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/measles.asp)

### **Influenza starting to increase**

Influenza season is getting going, so if you have not already received your flu shot, get one now. It will still protect for most of the flu season. Vaccine is still available.

In Iowa to date, 12 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases have occurred (this number does not include rapid flu positives). Most are A(H1), which is the dominant strain currently circulating in the U.S. Note: oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) resistance has been reported in 98% of A(H1N1) cases nationally. In Iowa, no cases have been confirmed to be oseltamivir resistant, however testing is ongoing.

Core points for health care providers and laboratories:

- It is important to submit periodic specimens to University Hygienic Lab (UHL) for flu confirmation as this allows the determination of the flu strains are circulating in Iowa. For more information, visit [www.uhl.uiowa.edu](http://www.uhl.uiowa.edu).
- Weekly Iowa influenza surveillance reports are available at [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/iisn.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/iisn.asp)

### **Update National *Salmonella* Typhimurium cluster**

IDPH is continuing to collaborate with CDC, and others in the investigation of the outbreak *Salmonella* Typhimurium. Currently there are 448 persons infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Typhimurium from 43 states; five deaths have been linked to this outbreak. Two possible cases in Iowa are being investigated.

Peanut butter packaged for institutions has been associated with these infections, but not to peanut butter sold in grocery stores. None of the implicated peanut butter has been distributed in Iowa. The investigation continues to determine if any other food products are associated with this outbreak.

Symptoms of salmonellosis include diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps within 12 to 72 hours after exposure, and can last four to seven days. Rehydration and electrolyte replacement is treatment of choice. Antibiotic treatment is not recommended except for persons at high risk, such as infants, and those who are immunocompromised.

The risk of salmonellosis can be reduced:

- Always cook meat, especially poultry completely.
- Always cook eggs and food containing eggs completely.
- If making foods, such as eggnog, homemade ice cream or sauces, that include raw eggs, use pasteurized eggs. (These can be found at grocery stores, in the refrigerated section, as liquid or shell eggs.)
- Wash hands after touching any animals, especially reptiles.

For more information about *Salmonella*, visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/epifacts/salmonella.pdf](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/epifacts/salmonella.pdf). For information on the current national outbreak of *Salmonella*, visit [www.cdc.gov/salmonella/typhimurium/](http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/typhimurium/)

### **Reportable disease reminder**

Reporting of certain diseases is required by Iowa Law (Administrative Code [641] Chapter 1). No diseases have been added or removed from the list in recent years. Please promptly report any cases. Information and posters listing the reportable diseases may be found at [www.idph.state.ia.us/idph\\_universalhelp/main.aspx?system=IdphEpiManual](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/idph_universalhelp/main.aspx?system=IdphEpiManual); select "Reportable Disease Information" from the menu on the left side.

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

None

### **Have a healthy and happy week!**

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