

**EPI Update for Friday, February 13, 2009**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Prevent the spread of Norovirus**
- **2008 Iowa rabies summary**
- **Influenza and RSV activity in Iowa**
- **International avian flu updates**
- **Not only sweethearts make us smile**
- **Diseases spread by kissing**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

**Prevent the spread of Norovirus**

The Iowa Department of Public Health has been notified about several recent outbreaks of norovirus in the state (one with over 30 people affected). We would like to encourage good health practices to prevent the spread.

Norovirus is commonly spread via contaminated food or water, but it can also be spread by contact with contaminated objects in the environment and by airborne spread when near someone who is vomiting or having diarrhea (i.e. in restrooms).

Along with washing hands and avoiding actively ill people, we recommend thoroughly cleaning/disinfecting contaminated surfaces (including carpets/clothes/linens) immediately after an episode of diarrhea or vomiting (especially in public places) using a disinfectant such as a bleach-based household cleaner. For more information about norovirus, visit either

[www.idph.state.ia.us/idph\\_universalhelp/main.aspx?system=IdphEpiManual&context=Norovirus\\_factsheet](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/idph_universalhelp/main.aspx?system=IdphEpiManual&context=Norovirus_factsheet) or [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/norovirus.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/norovirus.htm)

**2008 Iowa rabies summary**

In Iowa in 2008, of 1721 animals tested, 29 cases of animal rabies were reported. This is similar to last year, but is significantly fewer than previous years. Rabies was most frequently found in wildlife species, including 11 bats and 7 skunks; however, 9 cats, 1 cow, and 1 dog developed rabies also.

Two U.S. human rabies cases were reported in 2008. The first case had recently emigrated from Mexico and was most likely infected by a bat. The second case occurred in a 55 year old Missouri man who was bitten on the ear by a bat approximately 30 days prior to onset, but did not seek medical care.

To view the entire 2008 Iowa Rabies Summary visit:

[www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/rabies.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/rabies.asp)

**Influenza and RSV activity in Iowa**

Influenza activity is on the rise. A(H1) is the most common strain reported in Iowa; A(H3) and B cases remain low. In addition, RSV disease remains high with 30.3 percent

of test results reported as positive. For more information about influenza and other respiratory diseases visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp).

### **Avian influenza updates**

Several new stories about A(H5N1) avian influenza hit the media last week with human cases in Egypt and Vietnam; all confirmed human cases in 2009 have been in China, Egypt, or Vietnam; However, bird outbreaks have also occurred in Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

Current updates can always be found at [www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/); the WHO avian flu information is at [www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/). For information on the situation in birds and links to international reports consult [www.nwhc.usgs.gov/disease\\_information/avian\\_influenza/index.jsp](http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/disease_information/avian_influenza/index.jsp)

### **Not only sweethearts make us smile**

February is National Children's Dental Health month. It is recommended that all children have a dental exam by their first birthday. However, more than half of Iowa's general dentists do not see children younger than age 3 and more than 50 percent of Medicaid-enrolled children received no dental care in 2007.

The IDPH's I-Smile program is working to help families get dental care and create awareness of children's oral health. The creation of dental homes assures children receive early and regular care, including education, screenings, preventive services, and treatment.

During National Children's Dental Health month, dozens of I-Smile activities are planned across the state. In Linn County, for example, as many as 700 children are expected to take part in the "Give Kids a Smile Event" in which seven volunteer dentists, along with dental hygienists, assistants and students will provide free oral screenings, fluoride varnish applications, and more, along with fun activities and prizes. In Lee County, 15 dentists have agreed to see about 140 children. Woodbury County expects as many as 170 children to be examined by volunteering dentists.

For contact information on the I-Smile program, and a variety of resources on the programs of the Dental Health Bureau, go to [www.idph.state.ia.us/hpcdp/oral\\_health\\_ismile.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hpcdp/oral_health_ismile.asp).

### **Diseases spread by kissing**

In honor of Valentine's Day, the staff in CADE thought you might enjoy a little love humor! The list of infectious diseases spread by "saliva contact" is long, but here are a few of our *least* favorites:

#### *Oral herpes*

Infection by the type 1 strain of herpes simplex virus (HSV-1) is the most common cause of oral herpes, though cases of oral infection by the type 2 strain are on the rise.

#### *Mumps*

The Iowa mumps epidemic in 2006 was largely spread among college students throughout the state. Early in the epidemic there were multiple reports of spread between party attendees who reported kissing and playing drinking games.

### *Bacterial meningitis*

Bacterial meningitis is primarily spread through the exchange of respiratory and throat secretions including *Neisseria meningitides* and *Haemophilus influenzae* serotype b (Hib).

### *Mononucleosis*

“Mono”, caused by the Epstein-Barr virus, has been called the classic kissing disease.

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

The 33rd Annual Iowa Infection Prevention and Control Seminar will be held on May 5-6 at the Marriott Hotel in Coralville, Iowa. For registration materials, program and objectives, please see

[www.uihealthcare.com/depts/cqspi/newsevents/2009infectionctrl.pdf](http://www.uihealthcare.com/depts/cqspi/newsevents/2009infectionctrl.pdf) .

### **Have a healthy and happy week, and a Happy Valentine’s Day!**

Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology

Iowa Department of Public Health

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