

EPI Update for Friday, May 8, 2009
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- ? **Iowa statistics for novel influenza A (H1N1)**
- ? **Novel influenza A (H1N1) testing criteria effective 11 May 2009, 0800**
- ? **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Iowa statistics for novel influenza A (H1N1)

As of Friday, May 8th, there are 36 confirmed and 3 probable cases of novel influenza A (H1N1) in Iowa. All testing, both initial and confirmatory, is now being conducted at the University Hygienic Laboratory (UHL). As of today in the U.S., there is a total of 1,639 confirmed cases in 42 states, including Iowa. For additional information go to www.idph.state.ia.us/h1n1/

Novel influenza A (H1N1) testing criteria effective 11 May 2009, 0800

Testing guidance for Iowa health care providers has been changed. IDPH strongly recommends that clinicians follow the below criteria when caring for patients with suspected novel influenza A (H1N1) infection:

Only test patients who meet either of the following criteria:

- ✍ Influenza-like illness* and are at high-risk** for developing complications from influenza
- ✍ Patients currently hospitalized with influenza-like illness*
- ✍ Patients meeting the clinical case definition of influenza-like illness*

*The clinical case definition for influenza-like illness is fever (temperature of 100°F [37.8°C] or greater) and a cough and/or a sore throat in the absence of a KNOWN cause other than influenza.

**Groups at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications include:

- ? Children less than 5 years old;
- ? Persons aged 65 years or older;
- ? Children and adolescents (less than 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye syndrome after influenza virus infection;
- ? Pregnant women;

- ? Adults and children who have chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, hepatic, hematological, neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders;
- ? Adults and children who have immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV);
- ? Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities.

Please note that specimens submitted to UHL will be screened to determine whether patients meet the above criteria for testing. Symptoms including fever must be included on the test request form.

Testing instructions for novel influenza A (H1N1):

Tests: Posterior nasopharyngeal swab is the recommended test. Nasopharyngeal aspirate or wash will also be accepted. UHL will not charge for this test.

Collection: Use Dacron or rayon swabs with a flexible metal shaft swab or NP-flocked swab with flexible plastic shaft. Do not use calcium alginate or wooden-shafted swabs. Use M4 transport tube provided in kit or equivalent viral transport media. Place swabs in M4 transport medium, and do not remove. Do not send dry swabs. Refrigerate specimens at 2-8°C immediately after collection. **DO NOT FREEZE.**

Test request form instructions: On the viral test request form, **clearly document** all travel history and clinical information, including signs and symptoms. If the patient has traveled to an affected area, please write where and when the travel occurred. **THIS INFORMATION IS CRITICAL FOR SURVEILLANCE OF THIS OUTBREAK.**

Shipping: Wrap the specimen in absorbent material, and place into a biohazard bag. Ship the specimen at cold 4 degrees C with ice (cool) packs. Use routine courier service to transport specimens to UHL or contact your health care network laboratory coordinator for more information.

Instructions for collection and shipment, as well as the test request form can be found at www.uhl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/vidandpcrcollectioninstructions.pdf

Information hotlines:

General public: 800-447-1985
Health care: 866-282-5815
UHL: 319-335-4309

Suspect cases of novel influenza A (H1N1) should be reported immediately to 800-362-2736, option 3.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

The 2009 Iowa Immunization Conference, "Immunize for a Better Life," will be held on June 10-11 in Des Moines. The cost is only \$40/person.

The conference is designed to be of interest to a diverse field of health care professionals and will feature nationally recognized speakers, including Dr. Paul Offit from the Vaccine Education Center and Dr. Bill Atkinson from CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. The brochure is located at www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/immunization/conf_card.pdf. To register go to www.trainingresources.org/ViewConf.aspx?id=1355

Have a healthy and happy week!

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800-362-2736