

EPI Update for Friday, June 5, 2009
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Rodenticide ingestion by elementary school students in eastern Iowa triggers interagency response**
- **Keep pools healthy this summer**
- **Ticks Part III: Iowa ticks and the diseases that they transmit**
- **Influenza reporting update**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Rodenticide ingestion by elementary school students in Eastern Iowa triggers interagency response

This week a 7-year-old child brought Contrac Rodent Bait pellets (active ingredient bromadiolone) to his elementary school in eastern Iowa. The child found the bait packet, which had reportedly been placed in his home several years ago by a commercial pest control company, behind the refrigerator and brought it to school. The child passed the bait out to classmates telling them it was candy and seven children ingested the pellets before the situation was brought to the attention of school staff. Only a small amount of pesticide was ingested and none of the children were reported to have exhibited ill effects.

Many state and local agencies were involved in this response effort including: the local health department, the Iowa Statewide Poison Control Center (ISPCC), the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Pesticide Bureau, and the Iowa Department of Public Health Environmental Health Pesticide Surveillance Program.

The ISPCC provides 24/7 consultation for all poisonings and chemical exposures. The ISPCC can be reached at the following 800-222-1222. Please visit the IDPH Environmental Health Division website at: www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/default.asp or call 1-800-972-2026 for assistance.

Keep pools healthy this summer

The incidence of crypto typically begins to rise in late May or early June, about the time people start using "kiddie pools," swimming pools and beaches. The peak usually occurs in July or August. Crypto is an illness caused by a parasite that is typically found in the feces of an infected person or animal. It is spread by putting something in the mouth that has been contaminated, for example, swallowing contaminated pool water. Crypto causes cramps and severe, watery diarrhea.

To prevent the spread of crypto, always wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before handling food or eating, after using the toilet or changing diapers, and after contact with animals. Avoid swallowing water from lakes, streams and swimming pools. People ill with crypto should not use "kiddie" pools, swimming pools, or beaches, or any other recreational water facilities while having symptoms and for at least two weeks after their diarrhea ends since the illness can still spread for a time after recovery.

Ticks Part III: Iowa ticks and the disease that they transmit

While more than a dozen species of ticks are present in Iowa, there are three species that comprise that majority of ticks identified by the Iowa Lyme Disease Surveillance Program. These three species are:

- the blacklegged tick or deer tick
- the American dog tick or wood tick
- the lone star tick

The blacklegged tick is of the greatest importance to Iowans because it can transmit the bacteria that cause Lyme disease. These ticks can also transmit the bacteria that cause human granulocytic ehrlichiosis, equine ehrlichiosis, and several other bacteria and viruses that are not commonly identified in Iowa. These ticks are most abundant in northeastern and eastern Iowa and are often associated with oak forests.

The American dog tick is the most common species of tick in Iowa. They are active in every county in Iowa from late March through August. These ticks can transmit the bacteria that cause Rocky Mountain spotted fever and the bacteria that cause tularemia.

The lone star tick can be found throughout Iowa, but is most common in southern counties. This tick can transmit the bacteria that cause tularemia, canine and human granulocytic ehrlichiosis, and human monocytic ehrlichiosis.

For more information on ticks and tick-borne diseases in Iowa, please visit the following publication that was developed by the Iowa State University Medical Entomology Laboratory: www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM2036.pdf

Influenza reporting update

Beginning this week, all novel influenza A (H1N1) data will be combined with the regular seasonal flu data. A weekly report will continue to be published on the Iowa Influenza Surveillance Network (IISN) Web site at www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/iisn.asp.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy week!
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