

EPI Update for Friday, December 18, 2009
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **H1N1 quick points for health care providers**
- **Seasonal influenza vaccine availability**
- **Study of severe illness in H1N1 patients**
- **Other respiratory viruses identified in Iowa**
- **Give the gift of safety**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

H1N1 quick points for health care providers

- Four lots of Sanofi Pasteur's H1N1 vaccine were recalled because testing indicated that the strength of the vaccine was below pre-determined levels. Iowa was allocated approximately 28,600 doses of the affected vaccine, and it was distributed in approximately 45 counties. There is no safety issue with this vaccine, and revaccination is not needed.
- People with influenza-like-illness, may not actually have the flu (see other respiratory viruses below). Unless a person had a laboratory-confirmed 2009 H1N1 infection, that person should be vaccinated against H1N1.
- Remember, as of Monday, December 14th, all Iowans are now eligible to receive an H1N1 flu vaccination.
- Iowans should be encouraged to get their 2009 H1N1 vaccination before the holidays, as Iowa typically experiences increased flu activity right after the holiday travel and has the highest amount of flu activity in January and February.

Seasonal influenza vaccine availability

This year's seasonal influenza vaccine production, about 114 million doses, exceeded previous years. As of December 4, about **96 percent** had been distributed. Though most of this vaccine has been used, there are some local health departments and medical facilities that have a limited amount of vaccine still available. Please call your local health department for more information.

Study of severe illness in H1N1 patients

A recent article in the Journal of Critical Care reports that patients who were severely ill with H1N1 influenza showed remarkably high levels of certain types of Interleukin cytokines associated with cell mediated immunity and linked to harmful responses of autoimmune/inflammatory diseases. See:

ccforum.com/content/13/6/R201

Other respiratory viruses identified in Iowa

In the midst of a pandemic, it's easy to forget about other respiratory pathogens that are impacting the health of Iowans.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) activity has significantly increased recently in Iowa, particularly in the central and southern regions, as the percentage of positive rapid RSV results last week was twice that of the previous week.

Outpatient providers have also collected specimens that tested positive for adenovirus and parainfluenza 1, 2. Thus, these viruses are currently circulating in Iowa.

People with respiratory viral infections may think it is not necessary to get the 2009 H1N1 vaccination because they mistake their infection for influenza. Unless a person had a *laboratory-confirmed 2009 H1N1 infection (not just a rapid test positive)*, that person should be vaccinated for H1N1. All Iowans should be encouraged to get their 2009 H1N1 vaccination before the holidays.

Giving the gift of safety

Still looking for the perfect gift for someone? Give them a home carbon monoxide detector!

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning can be caused by defective furnaces, running a car in a garage, small gasoline-powered engines, tools, and other household appliances. Home CO detectors are as important as smoke detectors in preventing injury, illness, or death. Every home should have at least one CO alarm - and don't forget one for the workshop or garage, too.

Remember: all cases of carbon monoxide poisoning must be reported to the Iowa Statewide Poison Control Center (800-222-1222) or the IDPH Environmental Health Division (800-972-2026). For more information see www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/carbon_monoxide.asp.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

Biosafety and Biosecurity: Minimizing the Risks in the Laboratory. On January 13, 2010, at the University Hygienic Laboratory Ankeny facility, this course will cover the differences between biosafety and biosecurity, utilizing biosafety level (BSL) 3 practices in a BSL2 lab, and information on conducting risk assessments for both biosafety and biosecurity. For more information contact Rich Bonar at 319-335-4500 or richard-bonar@uiowa.edu.

There will be no Epi Update published next week. The next edition will be published December 29th.

We wish everyone very happy holidays! Stay healthy!

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