

EPI Update for Friday, March 26, 2010
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Safe handling tips for baby chicks**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Safe handling tips for baby chicks

During the Easter season baby chicks are sometimes given as gifts, and during spring months some stores have live birds on display for handling by the public. Live poultry may have *Salmonella* bacteria on their bodies and in their droppings, even when they appear healthy and clean. The bacteria can also get on cages, coops, and wherever birds walk around. It is important to wash your hands with soap and water after handling poultry or coming in contact with areas where birds have been, especially before touching food or your mouth.

Children are especially at risk for illness because their immune systems are still developing and because they are more likely than others to put their fingers or other items into their mouths. Health care providers should encourage their patients to enjoy this spring season and its cuddly creatures, but remember to protect themselves against the risk they pose by following these recommendations.

- Do not let children less than 5 years of age touch birds.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water immediately after touching poultry. Use a hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Adults should supervise hand washing in young children.
- Do not eat or drink around birds or around their living areas.
- Do not let birds inside the house or in areas where food or drink is prepared or served, such as in kitchens or on outdoor patios.
- When cleaning bird cages and related items, do so outside of your home; do not clean them in the kitchen sink or bathtub.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

The 34th Annual Iowa Infection Prevention and Control Seminar on May 4-5, 2010 in Cedar Rapids will cover infection prevention and patient safety. For more information, see www.uihealthcare.com/depts/cqspi/newsevents/index.html

Have a healthy and happy (and much warmer) week!

Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology
Iowa Department of Public Health
800-362-2736