

EPI Update for Friday, August 18, 2017
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Post-exposure rabies prophylaxis – it's not too late!**
- **Fungal Diseases in Iowa**
- **Stay safe when viewing next week's solar eclipse**
- **In the news: Short answers to hard questions about the opioid crisis**
- **Infographic: How to be safe around animals!**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Post-exposure rabies prophylaxis – it's not too late!

One of most common consultations asked of public health regards exposure to rabies. One common misconception encountered is that too much time has passed to give post exposure. NOTE: it is never too late to give rabies post-exposure prophylaxis!

The longest incubation period documented for human rabies was SEVEN YEARS – if that child had received post exposure prophylaxis any time during those seven years, he probably would not have died of rabies. Patients presenting months or even years following a potential exposure should be handled exactly the same as someone who was exposed very recently.

Prophylaxis following an exposure has medical urgency, and should generally be started as soon as possible following an exposure. The only exception is if the animal that exposed the patient is being tested or quarantined. In these cases, please consult with public health, as the circumstances of the bite, site of bite and animal biting the patient can change the recommendations – consultation is available 24/7/365 by calling 800-362-2736 during business hours or 515-323-4360 after hours.

For more information about rabies, visit idph.iowa.gov/rabies/information-for-providers.

Fungal Diseases in Iowa

Fungal diseases often go undiagnosed, but can cause serious illnesses around the world and in Iowa. While systemic fungal diseases like coccidioidomycosis can be found in Iowans who have traveled to the southwest part of the U.S., Iowans can get histoplasmosis and blastomycosis right here in Iowa; in fact, outbreaks of these diseases have occurred in Iowa in the last decade.

Travelers can and have picked up other fungal diseases and brought them back to Iowa; of concern are fungal strains like *Candida auris* that has developed resistance, making it harder to treat and contain.

Increased awareness about fungal diseases and timely testing can lead to better health outcomes and save lives. For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/fungal/awareness-week.html.

Stay safe when viewing next week's solar eclipse

Although Iowa is not in the path for a total solar eclipse on August 21, a partial solar eclipse will be experienced throughout the state. Without proper eye protection, a partial eclipse can permanently damage your vision.

It is important to use proper eye protection for safe viewing. The only safe way to look directly at the sun when it is partly eclipsed is with a special solar filter, such as eclipse glasses or a handheld solar viewer. Goggles, homemade filters or sunglasses, even very dark ones, will not protect your eyes. Also, always avoid looking at the sun through an unfiltered camera, smartphone, telescope or any other optical device. You'll need to add a certified solar filter to these devices to safely look at the eclipse.

Eclipse glasses and handheld solar viewers are inexpensive and can be purchased from many retailers; however, not all meet the required ISO 12312-2 international safety standards, so make sure yours do!

For more information about viewing the solar eclipse safely, visit www.cdc.gov/features/solar-eclipse-safety/index.html.

In the news: Short answers to hard questions about the opioid crisis www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/08/03/upshot/opioid-drug-overdose-epidemic.html?mcubz=3

Infographic: How to be safe around animals!



To view the image in full size, visit nasphv.org/Documents/AnimalExhibitsSafety.pdf.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

IDPH's yearly influenza webinar: Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 10:30 a.m. for individuals working in hospitals, clinics, laboratories and in infection control, and will include current influenza activity, influenza surveillance in Iowa, vaccine recommendations, laboratory specimen guidance, and antiviral treatment and prophylaxis for the 2017-2018 influenza season. To register,

visit zoom.us/webinar/register/b0ccc3d1d7f05eb0d746f627e8486654.

Have a healthy and happy week!

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800-362-2736