

Epi Update for Friday, January 10, 2020
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's Epi Update include:

- **Influenza activity high in Iowa**
- **Outbreak of Pneumonia of Unknown Etiology (PUE) in Wuhan, China**
- **Expanded options to cover HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) costs**
- **In the news: Rotavirus may be overdiagnosed due to vaccine virus shedding**
- **In the news: 5 things that will help keep your microbiome healthy**
- **In the news: The anti-vaccination movement that gripped Victorian England**
- **Infographic: Take 3 actions to fight the flu**

Influenza activity high in Iowa

Influenza activity in Iowa has been increasing on most indicators since early December. The geographic spread of influenza has been widespread across Iowa for three weeks and the percentage of positive influenza tests reported by clinical labs has been above 15%. Outpatient influenza-like illness during week 52 was the highest reported (5%) for at least six seasons and hospitalizations due to influenza continue to approach or surpass peak rates of recent seasons. Influenza B(Victoria lineage) has been the predominate virus detected at Iowa's State Hygienic Laboratory, followed by influenza A(H1N1)pdm09. A few influenza activity indicators dropped slightly this week; however, decreases are commonly seen during holiday weeks (i.e., schools are not in session, many medical clinics have reduced hours, and some patients may be more reluctant to seek medical care for more mild illnesses over the holidays) and it is too soon to tell if that trend will continue.

It is not too late to get vaccinated for influenza, as activity typically stays elevated through spring. Antiviral drugs are available to treat influenza, and should be given as early as possible after symptom onset to people who are very sick and those who are at high risk of developing severe illness, such as pregnant women, young children, older people and people with certain long-term health conditions.

To view the weekly influenza report, visit idph.iowa.gov/influenza/reports.

For additional guidance from CDC, visit <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00425.asp>

Outbreak of Pneumonia of Unknown Etiology in Wuhan City, China

CDC is monitoring a reported cluster of pneumonia of unknown etiology (PUE) with possible links to a fish and live animal market in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. As of January 5, 59 patients with PUE have been reported. Patients reportedly have had fever, dyspnea and bilateral lung infiltrates on chest radiograph. Of the 59 cases, seven are critically ill. No deaths have been reported and no health care providers have been reported to be ill. There has been no reported human-to-human transmission. Reports indicate that some of the patients were vendors at a fish and live animal market, suggesting a possible zoonotic origin to the outbreak. The market has been closed for cleaning and disinfection. Laboratory testing is ongoing. There are no known U.S. cases nor have cases been reported in countries other than China. CDC has issued a Level 1 travel notice ("practice usual precautions").

Healthcare providers are asked to:

- Contact IDPH immediately if patients present with severe respiratory symptoms (without known diagnosis) AND history of travel to Wuhan City since December 1, 2019, and had onset of illness within two weeks of returning.
 - Contact IDPH at 800-362-2736 during business hours or 515-323-4360 after hours.
 - At this time, IDPH is not recommending China-specific travel screening at point of registration.
 - Healthcare providers should routinely screen for travel as part of their normal clinical evaluation.
- IDPH will advise healthcare providers on obtaining respiratory and other relevant specimens.
- Again, no human-to-human transmission has been reported.
 - Patients should wear a surgical mask as soon as they are identified and be evaluated in a private room with the door closed.
 - Healthcare personnel should use contact precautions and wear an N95 disposable face-piece respirator.
 - For patients admitted for inpatient care, contact and airborne isolation precautions, in addition to standard precautions, are recommended until further information becomes available.

For more information, visit wwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/pneumonia-china.

Expanded options to cover HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) costs

PrEP is over 90% effective in preventing the acquisition of HIV and is a vital tool in the efforts to end HIV transmission. However, the high cost of medication and associated care can be barriers to PrEP uptake. Fortunately, there are many options to reduce costs and ensure patients have access to this critical HIV prevention method.

For insured patients, the manufacturer (Gilead Sciences) offers a generous patient assistance program of \$7,200/year that can be applied to co-pays, co-insurance and/or high deductibles. This is an annual limit and does not have a monthly cap. For uninsured patients, the manufacturer offers a full pay program that supports drug delivery to patients who are under 500% federal poverty limit (FPL), which requires semi-annual reauthorization.

The federal government has also announced a new program dubbed *Ready, Set, PrEP* which will provide no-cost medications to patients who do not have insurance coverage for outpatient drugs. More information on this program can be found at www.hiv.gov/federal-response/ending-the-hiv-epidemic/prep-program.

Finally, Iowa Medicaid patients receive these medications at no cost.

These programs only cover medication costs and do not offset costs associated with medical office visits or required laboratory studies. However, Iowa is lucky to have a state-wide telemedical PrEP (TelePrEP) service that provides medical care at no cost and can coordinate access to low or no cost laboratory services. More information on Iowa TelePrEP can be found at www.prepiowa.org/teleprep.

These programs ensure that patients in Iowa who want or need PrEP should never face barriers related to cost. If you need more information or have patients who need benefit navigation support, contact Seth Owens, Iowa PrEP Patient Navigator, at 319-930-9093 or visit www.prepiowa.org.

In the news: Rotavirus may be overdiagnosed due to vaccine virus shedding
www.medscape.com/viewarticle/923252

In the news: 5 things that will help keep your microbiome healthy
www.discovermagazine.com/health/5-things-that-will-help-keep-your-microbiome-healthy

In the news: The anti-vaccination movement that gripped Victorian England
www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-leicestershire-50713991

Infographic: Take 3 actions to fight the flu



To view in full size, visit www.cdc.gov/flu/resource-center/freeresources/graphics/infographic-fight-flu.htm.

Have a healthy and happy week!
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