

EPI Update for Friday, February 11, 2005
Center For Acute Disease Epidemiology
Iowa Department of Public Health

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Methamphetamine (Meth) in Iowa**
- **Health Tips for Valentine's Day**
- **The Epi 5**
- **Meeting Announcement and Training Opportunities**

Meth in Iowa

Facts & Figures (updated 12-28-04)

Over the last three years, 960 cases of Iowa children have been reported as victims of abuse due to parents manufacturing meth or possessing meth precursors.

In 2003, 1,167 child abuse cases were confirmed involving the presence of an illegal drug in a child's body.

As of December 28th, 1,301 meth lab incidents were reported for 2004, compared to a record high 1,182 lab responses for all of 2003. Iowa has the 3rd highest number of meth lab incidents, and is 2nd on a per-capita basis.

State narcotics agents confiscated 352 lbs of methamphetamine from communities throughout Iowa in 2003, twice the previous record quantity.

In 2003, over 99% of the meth lab precursor analyzed by the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation contained some form of pseudoephedrine.

The proportion of Iowa's drug treatment adult clientele listing meth as their primary substance of abuse has risen to an all-time high of 15.8 percent.

A federal report on drug treatment admissions says Iowa has the 4th highest rate of meth addiction in the nation.

Health Tips for Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is a day that traditionally focuses on love and letting loved ones know that you care. Whether you plan to celebrate on your own or with others for Valentine's Day, give the gift of health to yourself and your loved one. Below are a few tips to help keep you and your valentine safe and healthy on Valentine's Day and all year long.

Be active.

Include some physical activity in your celebration plans. For example, take a walk, or go dancing. Physical activity need not be strenuous to be beneficial; people of all ages benefit from participating in regular, moderate-intensity physical activity, such as 30 minutes of brisk walking five or more times a week. More is even better.

Be prepared for that romantic getaway.

If you are going on a trip, be prepared. Are vaccinations required? Are there special food, environmental, or other things you need to prepare for ahead of time? If you are taking medications, do you have enough for the trip?

Protect yourself.

Love is all around, but so are sexually transmitted diseases. Be safe.

Go easy on the bubbly.

If drinking alcohol is part of your celebration, remember that it can impair your judgment and actions. Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes kill someone every 31 minutes and nonfatally injure someone every two minutes. Don't drink and drive.

When a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, so does her unborn baby. This can cause a condition in the baby called fetal alcohol syndrome. There is no known safe amount of alcohol to drink while pregnant, and there also does not appear to be a safe time to drink during pregnancy, either, thus women should not drink alcohol during pregnancy.

Be safe.

Are you considering doing something new and different, and potentially risky or unsafe? Think twice before putting yourself at risk for injury. Be sure to use appropriate safety gear before venturing out, such as seat belts, life vests, or knee pads. Remember that unintentional injuries-those caused by accidents-kill more Americans in their first three decades of life than any other cause of death. In fact, injuries-both unintentional and those caused by acts of violence-are among the top ten killers for Americans of all ages.

Watch the sparks.

You may decide to cook a romantic dinner, light some candles, or have a cozy fire in the fireplace for Valentine's Day. Be watchful of anything that can potentially start an uncontrollable fire. Monitor candles and fireplaces. Most residential fires occur during the winter months, and alcohol use contributes to an estimated 40% of residential fire deaths.

Be heart-healthy.

February is American Heart Month. Take steps to be heart-healthy, including getting regular exercise, eating a nutritious diet, and maintaining a healthy body weight. Know the signs and symptoms of a heart attack, and act immediately by calling 911 if you or someone you know experiences them. A person's chance of surviving a heart attack is increased if emergency treatment is administered as soon as possible.

Be balanced in your diet.

Balance the candy and dinner out with healthy foods. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, choose foods low in fat and added sugars, and watch your portion size. (Note: Chocolate, in small amounts, may actually be good for you! This makes all of us chocoholics a CADE really happy!)

Be sensitive to your loved one's needs.

Does your loved one have allergies, asthma, diabetes, or other health condition(s)? Are they on a diet? Find out if certain foods, flowers, pets, stuffed animals, or other items might affect your loved one's health before you buy gifts, prepare food, or plan activities.

Be smoke-free.

If you smoke, quit today! Keep you and your loved ones healthier by not smoking and by avoiding secondhand smoke.

Spread the love, not the germs.

Since it's cold and flu season, take steps to avoid getting or spreading germs. Wash your hands often, avoid close contact when you or someone you know is sick.

For more information go to CDC's website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/od/spotlight/nwhw/valentine.htm>

The Epi 5:

Here are some more trivia questions on epidemiology and it's history:

1. What is the difference between a vector and a fomite?
2. What is incidence?
3. What is prevalence?
4. What is the relationship between incidence and prevalence?
5. What is the name of the longest running cohort study of cardiovascular disease?

Look for the answers to these questions in next week's Friday Epi Update.

Meeting Announcement and Training Opportunities:

Antibacterial Susceptibility Testing 2005

A Free Teleconference Series Featuring Janet Hindler

Attached is a brochure detailing the University of Iowa Hygienic Laboratory's free teleconference series titled, "Antibacterial Susceptibility Testing, 2005." The teleconference is cosponsored by the Hygienic Lab, NLTN, the Minnesota Department of Health, the North Dakota Public Health Laboratory, and the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene. The series targets laboratory scientists working in clinical, public health, and academic environments.

The series' sole presenter, Ms. Janet Hindler, will discuss the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute's 2005 antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST) guidelines and applying the guidelines to the laboratory "bench." After attending the teleconference, participants will understand: implementing current CLSI/NCCLS AST and reporting recommendations; methods for detecting resistance among commonly encountered pathogens that are most important from a clinical and public health perspective; which results obtained from patients' isolates need verification prior to reporting; and AST quality control recommendations.

Teleconference Series Dates:

February 24, 2005

March 10, 2005

March 31, 2005

April 12, 2005

All teleconferences will be held from 12:00pm to 1:30 p.m. Central Standard Time

The Hygienic Laboratory encourages you to notify other individuals who might benefit from, or just find interest in, attending this teleconference series. The University Hygienic Lab appreciates your cooperation and interest. For further information please contact Kyle Kingsley at 319-335-4864 or the Hygienic Lab's Training and Outreach Coordinator, Beth Hochstedler, at 319-335-4303.