

EPI Update for Friday, May 26, 2006
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- Mumps update
- Norovirus and summer fun
- Limited Menactra supply – Defer vaccination of 11-12 year olds
- May is Hepatitis Awareness Month – Part 3
- Its tick season too... Personal protection tips
- Conferences announcements

Mumps update

Mumps activity is slowing, not only in Iowa but in other states as well. The Iowa Mumps Update reported a total of 1,871 confirmed, probable, and suspect cases by the end of Wednesday, May 24. Beginning next week, the Iowa Mumps Update, which had been published twice a week, will be published once a week on Thursdays.

IDPH will continue over the summer to stress the importance of vaccinating college students prior to entry to the fall semester. Research articles and descriptive epidemiologic reports will continue to be produced by IDPH, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other states.

In addition, IDPH plans to continue to remind health care providers, public health officials, and other health partners of the potential for mumps activity throughout the summer and into the fall. The mumps epidemic has highlighted the significance of detecting emerging or re-emerging diseases early in an outbreak. IDPH also invites you to visit our Web site over the next few months regularly, and will continue to update and develop new mumps outbreak materials as needs arise. The mumps Web site is at www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/mumps.asp.

Norovirus and summer fun

The many festive venues of Memorial Day and throughout the summer are places where noroviruses, as well as other enteric pathogens, can cause illness. Noroviruses are a group of viruses that cause gastroenteritis in people. (Some people inaccurately call this “stomach flu.”) Since noroviruses can cause symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhea, which can further the spread of disease, remember to practice prevention steps such as **good hand washing before handling any food AND after using the restroom.**

Many food-related outbreaks reported to IDPH are found to be caused by noroviruses. Some tips on avoiding noroviruses and other pathogens are:

- Washing hands before food preparation and after restroom use.
- Keeping cold foods cold (below 40 degrees F) and hot foods hot (above 140 degrees F) after they are prepared.

- Avoiding “cross contamination” of raw meats and juices with prepared or cooked food.
- Preventing ill people from fixing food for others.
- Carefully cleaning food preparation surfaces with proper disinfectants.

For some interesting fact sheets on grilling meat and poultry safely go to www.fsis.usda.gov/.

For a fact sheet with more information on Norovirus go to idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/epifacts/norovirus.pdf.

Limited Menactra supply - Defer vaccination of 11-12 year olds

On May 19, a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) dispatch was published regarding the limited supply of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (Menactra) and included a recommendation to defer vaccination of individuals 11-12 years of age. Sanofi Pasteur anticipates that Menactra demand will outpace supply at least through the summer of 2006. The MMWR recommends that providers continue to vaccinate adolescents who have not previously received Menactra upon entry to high school, and college freshmen living in dormitories. Current supply projections from Sanofi Pasteur suggest that enough Menactra will be available to meet vaccine demand for these groups. Until further notice, administration of Menactra to persons aged 11-12 years should be deferred. If possible, providers should track persons aged 11-12 years for whom Menactra has been deferred and recall them for vaccination when the supply improves. A complete copy of the MMWR is available at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm55d520a1.htm?s_cid=mm55d520a1_e.

May is Hepatitis Awareness Month – Part 3

Perinatal Hepatitis B Program

If a pregnant woman has active infection with hepatitis B, it is likely her baby will become infected at birth unless specific actions are taken QUICKLY. Approximately 90 percent of babies who contract hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection will become chronic carriers and, of those, 25 percent will die of liver cancer or cirrhosis.

All pregnant women should be routinely tested for HBsAg during an early prenatal visit in each pregnancy. Prenatal serological specimens can be submitted to any laboratory performing a standard test for HBsAg. They may also be submitted to the University Hygienic Laboratory (UHL) for anyone who is unable to pay for this service. All HBsAg-positive specimens must be reported to the IDPH Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology by written report, secure fax at 515-281-5698, or telephone at 1-800-362-2736.

Serology reports are received from the Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology for follow up when a female is found to be positive for hepatitis B and is pregnant. The delivery hospital will be notified that the newborn is at risk for transmission of hepatitis B virus and advised to administer hepatitis B immune globulin and hepatitis B vaccine within 12 hours of birth. The infant should receive subsequent vaccinations at 1 month and 6 months of age. Breast-feeding is not contraindicated for vaccination.

For the complete MMWR article on eliminating hepatitis B transmission (December 2005) from mothers to infants, please go to the following CDC Web page at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis/b/education/index.htm.

Its tick season too – Personal protection tips

It is difficult for a person to completely eliminate activities that may result in tick exposure. Therefore, prevention measures should emphasize personal protection when exposed to areas where ticks are present. They include:

- Wear light-colored clothing, which allows you to see ticks that are crawling on your clothing.
- Tuck your pant legs into your socks so that ticks cannot crawl up the inside of your pants.
- Apply repellents to discourage tick attachment. Repellents containing permethrin can be sprayed on boots and clothing, and will last for several days. Repellents containing DEET (n, n-diethyl-m-toluamide) can be applied to the skin, but will last only a few hours before reapplication is necessary. Use DEET with caution on children. Application of large amounts of DEET on children has been associated with adverse reactions and should not be used on children under 2 months of age.
- Conduct a body check upon return from potentially tick-infested areas by searching your entire body for ticks. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body. Remove any ticks you find.
- Parents should check their children for ticks, especially in the hair, when returning from potentially tick-infested areas. Ticks may also be carried into the household on clothing and pets and only attach themselves later; both clothing and pets should be examined carefully.

Conference Announcements:

Iowa Multi-Hazard Bio-Preparedness Symposium; Bringing the Players Together.
Scheman Building, Iowa State Center, Ames, Iowa, June 1-3, 2006

Have a healthy and happy week!
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