

Epi Update for Friday, October 1, 2021

Office of the Public Health Medical Director Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE) Bureau of HIV, STD, and Hepatitis

Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's Epi Update include:

- CDC urges vaccination for pregnant people
- Influenza season starts October 3. Help us prevent flu.
- September 28: World Rabies Day
- In the news: Illinois man dies after catching rabies from an apparent bat bite while he slept at home
- Infographic: Protect yourself and your baby from COVID-19. Get vaccinated

CDC urges vaccination for pregnant people

CDC recently released a health advisory urgently recommending COVID-19 vaccination for people who are pregnant, recently pregnant (including those who are lactating), who are trying to become pregnant, or who might become pregnant in the future.

More than 125,000 COVID-19 cases have been reported in pregnant people, including more than 22,000 hospitalized cases and 161 deaths. The highest number of COVID-19-related deaths in pregnant people in a single month of the pandemic (22) was reported in August. In addition to the risks of severe illness and death for pregnant and recently pregnant people, there is an increased risk for adverse pregnancy and neonatal outcomes, including preterm birth and admission of neonates to an intensive care unit (ICU). Other adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as stillbirth, have been reported.

Despite the known risks of COVID-19, as of September 18, only 31% of pregnant people were fully vaccinated before or during their pregnancy. In addition, there are racial and ethnic disparities in vaccination coverage for pregnant people.

Health care providers should communicate the risks of COVID-19, the benefits of vaccination, and information on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy.

To view the full health advisory, visit emergency.cdc.gov/han/2021/pdf/CDC HAN 453.pdf.

Influenza season starts October 3. Help us prevent flu.

The 2021-22 influenza season starts October 3, along with influenza and other respiratory illness-related surveillance activities. IDPH recently hosted the annual influenza webinar, and the slides and recording are available at idph.iowa.gov/influenza.

IDPH's weekly influenza reports will resume October 15. IDPH is still looking for schools, hospitals, outpatient health clinics, and laboratories to help with influenza surveillance. For more information, contact Andy Weigel at andy.weigel@idph.iowa.gov or 515-322-1937.

Do not count on the 2021-22 influenza season being as mild as the 2020-21 season. Getting an annual influenza vaccine remains the best way to prevent getting influenza. However, it is also important to take other steps to prevent getting sick, including covering your coughs and sneezes, staying home when you are sick, and washing your hands regularly.

For more information about influenza from IDPH, visit idph.iowa.gov/immtb/immunization/influenza/recommendations.

For more information about influenza from CDC, visit www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/index.html.

September 28: World Rabies Day

September 28 was World Rabies Day, which raises awareness about rabies and brings together partners to enhance prevention and control efforts worldwide. Despite rabies being 100% preventable, more than 59,000 people die from the disease around the world each year.

Although cases in humans are rare, rabies is still present in many parts of the U.S., including lowa. Due to vaccination of dogs and cats, most human cases of rabies in the U.S. are due to exposure to wildlife. However, any mammal can become infected with rabies and transmit the virus to humans. About one to two dozen animals test positive for rabies each year in lowa.

Once a person begins showing signs and symptoms of rabies, the disease is nearly always fatal. However, only two cases of rabies in humans have been reported in Iowa since 1951, in large part due to the administration of appropriate post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) after exposure to animals that could potentially transmit rabies.

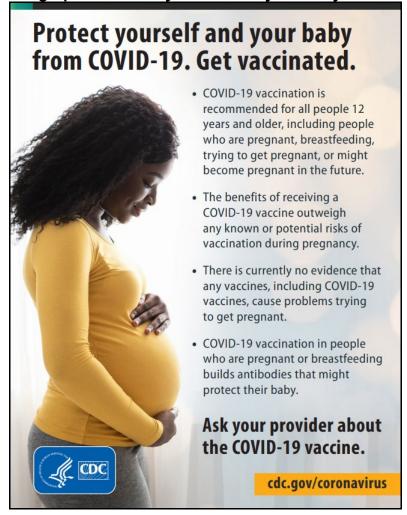
IDPH is available for consultation regarding potential rabies exposures 24/7/365. Call 515-242-5935 during business hours or 515-323-4360 outside of business hours.

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

In the news: Illinois man dies after catching rabies from an apparent bat bite while he slept at home

www.cbsnews.com/news/rabies-illinois-bat-bite-death/

Infographic: Protect yourself and your baby from COVID-19. Get vaccinated



To view in full size, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/vaccines/protect-yourself-and-your-baby-print.pdf

Have a healthy and happy week!

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