Epi Update for Friday, April 1, 2022

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:
- **FDA: Use and store at-home COVID-19 tests properly to avoid potential harm**
- **CDC releases quick, easy COVID-19 quarantine and isolation calculator**
- **Recent norovirus outbreaks, important prevention tips**
- **Infographic: Using your COVID-19 self-test**

FDA: Use and store at-home COVID-19 tests properly to avoid potential harm
FDA authorized at-home COVID-19 tests are safe to use when following the test's step-by-step instructions. However, per a recent FDA alert, at-home COVID-19 tests may cause harm if not used according to manufacturer's instructions or not kept away from children and pets. Examples include having the liquid solutions in the test introduced into the nose/eyes or small parts of the test such as liquid vials being swallowed.

Recommendations for using COVID-19 rapid tests include:
- Keep all parts of test kits out of reach from children and pets before and after use.
- Store the test in its box until you are ready to use it.
- Follow the manufacturer's step by step test instructions exactly.
- Read the Warning, Precautions, And Safety Information in the test instructions for a description of chemical ingredients and recommendations for safe handling and what to do if they accidentally touch your skin or eyes.
- Keep the liquid solution away from the skin, nose, mouth, and eyes. Do not swallow the liquid solution.
- Use only the swab in the test kit to collect a nasal sample.

Get medical help right away by contacting your local poison control or health care provider if:
- Skin or eye irritation does not go away after exposure.
- A person or animal swallows the liquid solution.

To view the full FDA alert, visit www.fda.gov/medical-devices/safety-communications/use-and-store-home-covid-19-tests-properly-avoid-potential-harm-fda-safety-communication.

CDC releases quick, easy COVID-19 quarantine and isolation calculator
CDC has developed an online, mobile-friendly COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation Calculator that can quickly and easily determine how long people with COVID-19 and their close contacts are recommended to stay home, get tested, and wear a mask. The calculator also provides guidelines people with COVID-19 and their close contacts can take to prevent further spread.

The tool is not for people with COVID-19 who are moderately or severely ill or those who are immunocompromised - they should talk to their doctor about when to end isolation.

The calculator and full COVID-19 quarantine and isolation guidelines can be found at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html.

Recent norovirus outbreaks, important prevention tips
IDPH and local public health partners have recently investigated multiple confirmed and suspected norovirus outbreaks in a variety of settings ranging from long-term care facilities to schools. Norovirus is the most common cause of outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness in Iowa.

Norovirus is extremely infectious and can spread from person to person, via contaminated food, or from contact with contaminated surfaces. This is why proper hand washing is extremely important at all times, but especially after using the restroom and before preparing or eating food. Staying home while ill with vomiting and diarrhea is critical to prevent spread.

Suspected outbreaks of any cause are reportable to IDPH. To report an outbreak, contact CADE immediately at 515-242-5935 during business hours or 515-323-4360 after hours.

For more information about norovirus, visit www.cdc.gov/norovirus/about/index.html.

Infographic: Using your COVID-19 self-test

To view in full size, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/testing/COVID-19_Using-Your-Home-Test-Kit.pdf

Have a healthy and happy week!

Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology
800-362-2736

Bureau of HIV, STD, and Hepatitis
515-281-6801