

EPI Update for Friday, February 10, 2023

CENTER FOR ACUTE DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY (CADE)
BUREAU OF HIV, STD, AND HEPATITIS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Items for this week's EPI Update include

- **Reminder: All outbreaks are reportable to public health**
- **Iowa labs contribute to national influenza surveillance for genetic changes, vaccine match, antiviral susceptibility**
- **Increase in meningococcal disease**
- **Infographic: Rules of the game for food safety**

Reminder: All outbreaks are reportable to public health

Suspected outbreaks due to any infectious disease are reportable to Iowa HHS. This is true regardless of facility type or organism and includes diseases not explicitly listed on the reportable disease list or when the causative agent of the illnesses is unknown. Reporting outbreaks allows for public health intervention, pathogen identification, education, and prevention of further disease spread.

Some diseases have specific criteria that guide when to classify a cluster of illnesses as an outbreak, but when in doubt please contact CADE for consultation.

To report suspected outbreaks of all types, contact CADE at 515-242-5935.

For more information about outbreak reporting in Iowa and the reportable disease list, visit hhs.iowa.gov/CADE/reportable-diseases.

Iowa labs contribute to national influenza surveillance for genetic changes, vaccine match, antiviral susceptibility

SHL submits a sample of influenza specimens to CDC and regional labs to perform genetic and antigenic characterization. These specimens allow CDC to look for evolutionary changes in currently circulating influenza viruses and determine how closely they match the season's influenza vaccine. For more information about the characterization of influenza viruses, see the influenza virus section of the *Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report*.

SHL has received results from CDC for 55 specimens submitted so far this influenza season: 36 influenza AH3N2 and 19 influenza AH1N1pdm09. Thirty-one of these specimens were genetically characterized and match the two influenza A hemagglutinin (HA) clades reported on the *Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report*. Six of the seven Iowa specimens that have been antigenically characterized so far were well recognized by ferret antisera to the appropriate vaccine component (e.g., AH1N1 pdm09 or AH3N2). This is similar to national results.

SHL also submits a subset of influenza specimens to test for susceptibility to influenza antiviral medications including oseltamivir, zanamivir, peramivir and baloxivir. All of the specimens submitted by SHL this season have been susceptible to influenza antiviral medication.

To view the *Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report*, visit www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/index.htm.

Increase in meningococcal disease

Iowa HHS has detected an increase in invasive meningococcal disease (illness caused by *Neisseria meningitidis*) activity.

Early identification and reporting of cases are key to preventing further transmission. Public health responds immediately to reports of meningococcal disease by rapidly identifying close contacts for prophylaxis to prevent transmission.

The following steps are recommended for health care providers:

- Remain vigilant for suspected cases of meningococcal infection, especially in patients presenting with sudden onset of fever, headache, stiff neck, photophobia, altered mental status, severe aches/pain, rapid breathing, and/or in later stages a dark purple rash.
- Identification of *N. meningitidis* from a normally sterile site is immediately reportable to CADE at 515-242-5935 (during business hours) or 515-323-4360 (outside business hours). CADE will assist in coordinating isolates being sent to SHL for serotyping.
- Encourage routine vaccination of MenACWY vaccine in adolescents and younger children, also including children and adults at increased risk of infection.

Contact CADE with questions or concerns at 515-242-5935.

Infographic: Rules of the game for food safety



To view in full size, visit www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/communication/rules-of-game.html.

Have a healthy and happy week!

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515-281-6801