

# Epi Update for Friday, December 13, 2024

## CENTER FOR ACUTE DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY (CADE)

### Iowa Department of Health and Human Services

Items for this week's Epi Update include

- Continued pertussis activity in Iowa
- Peak norovirus season approaching
- In the news: California teacher dies from rabies month after being bitten by bat in her classroom
- In the news: US closes investigation into *E. coli* outbreak linked to onions in McDonald's Quarter Pounders
- Infographic: The flu ends with you!

#### Continued pertussis activity in Iowa

Substantial pertussis activity continues in Iowa and nationally, reflecting increased activity prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Health care providers should consider pertussis in patients that present with a cough that cannot be explained by another reason. The recommended test for pertussis is a nasopharyngeal (NP) swab tested by PCR. Patients should be recommended to stay home while pertussis laboratory tests are pending.

Each reported case of pertussis is followed-up individually by local public health partners. They recommend isolation for the patient until they are no longer infectious - generally for 21 days from the beginning of the cough or until five days of appropriate antibiotic treatment. In addition, post-exposure antibiotic prophylaxis is recommended for all household contacts.

To prevent severe pertussis cases in the community, public health routinely works with child care centers, schools, workplaces, health care facilities, and more to identify the close contacts of pertussis cases. These individuals are instructed to watch for symptoms and are recommended post-exposure prophylaxis if they are at high risk of pertussis or have close contact with someone who is high risk. Individuals at high risk for severe pertussis include infants and immunocompromised individuals.

The best way to prevent pertussis is through vaccination, though protection may wane over time. CDC recommends pertussis vaccination for everyone.

For more information about pertussis, visit

[hhs.iowa.gov/center-acute-disease-epidemiology/epi-manual/reportable-diseases/pertussis](https://hhs.iowa.gov/center-acute-disease-epidemiology/epi-manual/reportable-diseases/pertussis).

#### Peak norovirus season approaching

Norovirus tends to peak during the winter months. Iowa HHS and local public health partners have investigated multiple norovirus outbreaks so far this fall. Norovirus is the most common cause of outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness in Iowa. There is no specific treatment for norovirus.

Norovirus is extremely infectious and spreads through feces or vomit directly from person to person, through contaminated food, or through contact with contaminated surfaces. Hand washing is therefore always extremely important, but especially after using the restroom and before preparing or eating food. Individuals ill with diarrhea or vomiting should stay home. Cleaning high-touch surfaces and bathrooms with bleach solution or products that specifically list as being effective against norovirus can also reduce the risk of spread.

For cleaning products that are effective against norovirus, visit [www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/epas-registered-antimicrobial-products-effective-against-norovirus-feline](http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/epas-registered-antimicrobial-products-effective-against-norovirus-feline).

Suspected outbreaks of any cause are reportable to Iowa HHS. 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](http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/about/index.html).

**In the news: California teacher dies from rabies month after being bitten by bat in her classroom**  
[www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/california-teacher-dies-rabies-month-bitten-bat-classroom-rcna182670](http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/california-teacher-dies-rabies-month-bitten-bat-classroom-rcna182670)

**In the news: US closes investigation into E. coli outbreak linked to onions in McDonald's Quarter Pounders**  
[apnews.com/article/mcdonalds-e-coli-outbreak-quarter-pounder-11cade2b0593c52c957fcf12c894c65f](http://apnews.com/article/mcdonalds-e-coli-outbreak-quarter-pounder-11cade2b0593c52c957fcf12c894c65f)

### Infographic: The flu ends with you!

**The Flu Ends With You!**

**Protect yourself and those you love from the flu.**

Influenza (flu) is an illness that infects the nose, throat and lungs. People at higher risk of flu complications include children younger than 5, people 65 and older, and those with certain chronic conditions. It's important to be vaccinated each year to prevent getting the flu.

**Ask your family's healthcare providers about the flu vaccine.**

Health and Human Services

Source: cdc.gov

To view in full size, visit [content.govdelivery.com/attachments/IACIO/2024/11/14/file\\_attachments/3070875/296-9530\\_HHS\\_Immunization\\_FY24\\_December\\_Poster\\_8.5x11\\_vD.pdf](http://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/IACIO/2024/11/14/file_attachments/3070875/296-9530_HHS_Immunization_FY24_December_Poster_8.5x11_vD.pdf).

**Have a healthy and happy week!**  
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