

Epi Update for Friday, January 3, 2025

CENTER FOR ACUTE DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY (CADE)

Iowa Department of Health and Human Services

Items for this week's Epi Update include

- Respiratory virus activity increasing in Iowa: Protect yourself and others
- Norovirus outbreak reports increasing in Iowa, nationally
- In the news: Stomach bug symptoms to know as norovirus cases are surging in parts of U.S.
- Infographic: Stay away from sick or dead wild birds while outdoors to avoid potential exposure to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

Respiratory virus activity increasing in Iowa: Protect yourself and others

Respiratory virus activity in Iowa has been increasing for the last several weeks. Influenza and RSV increases have been most significant, but COVID-19 and some other viruses are also on the rise.

The percentage of tests reported as positive on the *Iowa Respiratory Virus Survey* has increased sharply for influenza and RSV in the last four weeks, from just over 1% to almost 16% for influenza and from under 2% to over 8% for RSV. For the week ending December 28, the proportion of inpatient visits identified via syndromic surveillance was at 1%, 1.8% and 2.1% respectively for RSV, COVID-19, and influenza, up from 0.2%, 0.1% and 1% respectively four weeks ago.

Fortunately, many of the same precautions (e.g., hand hygiene, staying home when ill, and covering coughs and sneezes) help prevent the spread of these viruses. Vaccination remains the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones against serious outcomes of viral respiratory illnesses.

To view the weekly *Iowa Respiratory Virus Surveillance Report*, visit hhs.iowa.gov/center-acute-disease-epidemiology/iowa-influenza-surveillance.

Norovirus outbreak reports increasing in Iowa, nationally

CADE continues to receive an increased number of reports of confirmed and suspected norovirus outbreaks within the community and in health care settings. CDC has also reported more recent norovirus outbreaks nationally vs. this time period in previous years.

There is no vaccine and no specific treatment for norovirus, which is highly contagious and spreads via the fecal/oral route. Individuals may be infectious prior to illness onset and for two weeks or more following recovery. However, the highest risk of spread is associated with vomiting events and while the individual is experiencing diarrhea.

Individual cases of norovirus are not reportable in Iowa, but all outbreaks are reportable. Suspected outbreaks can be reported to CADE at 515-242-5935. Iowa HHS and local public health partners investigate outbreak reports to interrupt further spread by providing setting-specific guidance and norovirus-specific cleaning recommendations.

Proper hand hygiene and staying home while sick are always key prevention steps against many gastrointestinal and respiratory illnesses.

For more information about norovirus, visit hhs.iowa.gov/center-acute-disease-epidemiology/epi-manual/information-other-diseases-and-conditions-fact-sheets/norovirus.

In the news: Stomach bug symptoms to know as norovirus cases are surging in parts of U.S.
www.cbsnews.com/amp/news/norovirus-cases-surging-parts-of-us-cdc-data/

Infographic: Stay away from sick or dead wild birds while outdoors to avoid potential exposure to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)



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content.govdelivery.com/attachments/IACIO/2024/12/31/file_attachments/3116386/Stay%20Away%20from%20Wild%20Birds%20While%20Outdoors%20%283%29.png.

Have a healthy and happy week!
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology
800-362-2736