

# Epi Update for Friday, May 16, 2025

## CENTER FOR ACUTE DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY (CADE)

### Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS)

Items for this week's Epi Update include

- ***Cyclospora* positive stool? Send it to SHL!**
- Submit positive influenza specimens during the off-season to aid novel influenza detection
- Keep food out of the Danger Zone
- In the news: New "gas station heroin" tianeptine product trend
- Infographic: How infected backyard poultry could spread bird flu to people

#### ***Cyclospora* positive stool? Send it to SHL!**

SHL and Iowa HHS are asking clinical labs that detect *Cyclospora* in stool specimens to forward the sample to SHL for genotyping at CDC. This request is being made as part of a national effort to better track and detect *Cyclospora* outbreaks in real-time.

Stool specimens must be preserved in Total Fix, ProtoFix, or SAF. Samples preserved in formalin are unacceptable for genotyping. To submit a specimen for *Cyclospora* genotyping, navigate to the SHL Test Request Form Page at [shl.uiowa.edu/testmenu/formgenerator.xml](http://shl.uiowa.edu/testmenu/formgenerator.xml) and select the test request form *Mycobacteriology/Mycology/Parasitology*. Scroll down and select your facility, then click submit. Complete the form with all relevant patient and specimen information. Select the *Modified Acid-Fast Smear for Parasites* test and write "positive *Cyclospora* and the preservative".

Questions regarding *Cyclospora* reporting should be directed to Iowa HHS at 515-242-5935. Questions regarding *Cyclospora* testing should be directed to the Diagnostic Microbiology section at SHL, 319-335-4335.

For more information about *Cyclospora*, visit [www.cdc.gov/parasites/cyclosporiasis/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/cyclosporiasis/index.html).

#### **Submit positive influenza specimens during the off-season to aid novel influenza detection**

Although influenza activity has decreased to interseasonal levels, Iowa HHS and SHL ask laboratories to continue sending influenza positive specimens to SHL for further testing. Given the continued identification of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) among birds and dairy cattle nationally, maintaining capacity to detect novel influenza viruses in Iowa is more crucial than ever.

Two influenza positive specimens should be sent to SHL each week. Prioritize positive specimens from patients with close or prolonged contact with poultry and livestock. Specimens that are positive for influenza A, but negative for seasonal influenza subtypes (assuming the test is able to give influenza A subtype results), should also be sent to SHL.

SHL influenza testing will include real-time RT-PCR screening for influenza A/H5, current seasonal circulating influenza A genotypes, and influenza B. Any specimen that tests positive for influenza A/H5 at SHL will be sent to CDC for confirmatory testing.

Health care providers should remain vigilant for patients presenting with influenza symptoms during the summer and fall. If a patient presents with conjunctivitis and/or influenza-like symptoms and has a high-risk avian influenza exposure (e.g., exposed to birds or animals infected with HPAI), health care providers should contact Iowa HHS at 800-362-2736 to discuss testing for avian influenza.

### Keep food out of the Danger Zone

Bacteria in food multiply rapidly between 40° and 140° F and therefore food should spend as little time as possible within this Danger Zone. Cold foods should be kept at 40° F or below by placing them in the refrigerator, insulated coolers with cold sources, or over ice. If cooling is not available, follow the 2-hour rule or 1-hour rule if outdoor temperatures are above 90 F. After these timeframes, perishable foods are no longer safe and should be discarded.

Non-perishable snacks like crackers, chips, popcorn, pretzels, candy, trail mix, and granola bars can withstand the summer heat and remain safe without being kept cold.

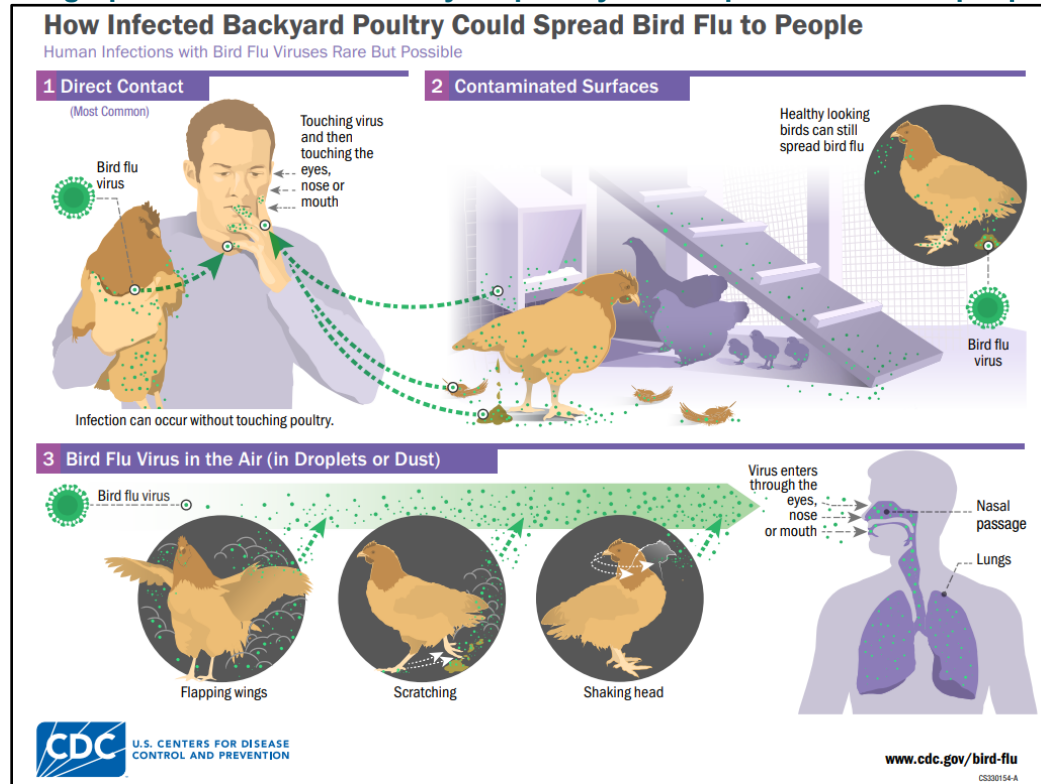
For more information, visit

[www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/food-safety-basics/danger-zone-40f-140f](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/food-safety-basics/danger-zone-40f-140f).

### In the news: New “gas station heroin” tianeptine product trend

[www.fda.gov/consumers/health-fraud-scams/new-gas-station-heroin-tianeptine-product-trend](http://www.fda.gov/consumers/health-fraud-scams/new-gas-station-heroin-tianeptine-product-trend)

### Infographic: How infected backyard poultry could spread bird flu to people



To view in full size, visit [www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/media/pdfs/2024/07/avian-flu-transmission.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/media/pdfs/2024/07/avian-flu-transmission.pdf).

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