

EPI Update for Friday, September 28, 2007
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **West Nile virus warning**
- **Healthy People 2010 goals unmet for adolescent vaccinations**
- **National Food Safety Education Month - wash your fruits and vegetables**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

West Nile virus warning

The first death in Iowa this year associated with West Nile virus infection has been reported. The patient was an elderly male from Central Iowa. He died in late August. Sixteen human cases of West Nile virus disease have been reported thus far in 2007.

Also, Iowa State University's Department of Entomology is reporting extremely high numbers of mosquitoes in September. Due to the wet weather in August, populations of mosquitoes have skyrocketed, which includes the *Culex tarsalis* species, the mosquito that can carry West Nile virus and other disease causing viruses.

Everyone should continue to use precautions to prevent mosquito bites, and health care providers should realize West Nile virus infections are still occurring.

To avoid getting bitten:

- Use insect repellent with DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus;
- Avoid outdoor activities at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active;
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, shoes, and socks whenever possible outdoors; and
- Eliminate standing water around the home where mosquitoes lay eggs. Empty water from buckets, cans, pool covers and pet water dishes.

Information about West Nile virus and St. Louis and other types of mosquito-borne encephalitis can be found at:

- www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/wnv_surveillance.asp
- www.uhl.uiowa.edu/services/wnv/
- lab.bcb.iastate.edu/sandbox/mishar/index.php

Healthy People 2010 goals unmet for adolescent vaccinations

According to the results of the 2006 National Immunization Survey, the Healthy People 2010 target of more than 90 percent vaccination coverage among adolescents aged 13 to 15 years has not been met for any of the adolescent vaccines analyzed. The results were reported in the Aug. 31 issue of the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. For all adolescents aged 13 to 17 years, coverage with at least three doses of hepatitis B vaccine was 81.3 percent. For measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine, coverage was 86.9 percent. Tetanus vaccination rates were 41.7 percent for children who reached age 13 years in 2006, up from 22.7 percent in 2002.

Since 2005, four new vaccines specifically for adolescents have been licensed and recommended in the United States: meningococcal conjugate vaccine, tetanus, acellular pertussis vaccine, and human papillomavirus vaccine. For more information, visit

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5634a3.htm>

National Food Safety Education Month

Wash your fruits and vegetables

Did you know that before you bite into an apple, as many as 20 people have already handled it? Do you know if they washed their hands before they touched your fruits or vegetables? Probably not. That is why during National Food Safety Education Month we are emphasizing properly washing your fruits and vegetables before eating them.

Here's how to wash fresh produce:

- Before working with any foods, hands should be washed with soap and water. Also, make sure your food preparation areas are clean.

- Under clean, running water, rub fruits and vegetables briskly with your hands to remove dirt and surface microorganisms.
- Wash produce just before serving - not before storing, as washing will cause produce to spoil faster.
- Produce with a firm skin or hard rind like carrots, potatoes, melons or squash may be scrubbed with a vegetable brush and water.
- Discard the outer leaves of leafy vegetables such as lettuce and cabbage before washing.
- Always wash squash and melons before cutting, even if you don't eat the rind or skin, because when cut dirt or bacteria that is on the outer surface can be transferred to the inner flesh.
- DO NOT wash produce with detergent or bleach solutions. Fruits and vegetables are porous and can absorb the detergent or bleach, which is not intended for use on foods; consuming them on fruits and vegetables have the potential to make you sick.
- Commercial produce sprays and washes are not currently recommended.

For more information on food safety, please visit www.cdc.gov/foodsafety.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

IDPH/Local Regional Environmental Health Meetings

Targeted audience is Environmental Health Officers. For more information contact Carmily Stone at Carmily.Stone@idph.state.ia.us

All meetings are from 10:00am to 3:30pm

Region 1

October 16th

Ankeny

Iowa Lab Facility- DMACC room #209

Region 2

October 25th

Mason City

Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health

Region 3

October 31st

Spencer
Clay County Administration Building

Region 4

October 12th
Atlantic
Cass County Memorial Hospital

Region 5

November 15th
Washington
Washington County Conservation Center

Region 6

October 18th
Toddville
Wickiup Hill Learning Center- Classroom A

Have a healthy and happy week, and enjoy the autumn colors!

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