EPI Update for Friday, May 16, 2008
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Increase in number of *Shigella* cases**
- **New mosquito repellant approved by the CDC**
- **Ticks are out!!**
- **Five ways to go "green" without getting sick- tips for everyday food preparation and consumption**

Increase in *Shigella* cases

There has been an increase in the number of cases of *Shigella* in the past week. Over 50 percent of case patients have been located in the eastern part of the state. To date this year, 31 cases have been reported to IDPH. Shigellosis refers to disease caused by any bacteria in the genus *Shigella*. There are four *Shigella* species: *S. dysenteriae* (Group A)*, S. flexneri* (Group B)*, S. boydii* (Group C)*,* and *S. sonnei* (Group D). Groups A, B, C, and D are further divided into 12, 14, and 18 serotypes, respectively, but S*. sonnei* consists of only one serotype.

Symptoms are characterized by bloody diarrhea accompanied by fever, nausea and sometimes, vomiting, cramps and tenesmus (painful, especially ineffectual straining at stool or urination). Illness is usually self-limited, lasting an average of 4 to 7 days. The most common complication is dehydration.

For food handlers, child care employees and attendees, and direct care givers, two negative stool cultures must be obtained after resolution of diarrhea before they may return to work/school/child care. If a case has been treated with an antimicrobial, the stool specimen shall not be submitted until at least 48 hours after completion of therapy and the two specimens must be taken at least 24 hours apart. Good hand hygiene must be practiced.

For more information visit:
www.idph.state.ia.us/idph_universalhelp/main.aspx?system=IdphEpiManual

New mosquito repellant approved by the CDC

CDC has approved a new mosquito repellent, IR3535, for use on skin and clothing. To date, the CDC has approved the following products:

- **DEET** (Chemical Name: N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide or N,N-diethly-3-methyl-benzamide)
- **Picaridin** (KBR 3023, Chemical Name: 2-(2-hydroxyethyl)-1-piperidinecarboxylic acid 1-methylpropyl ester)

- **Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus*** or **PMD** (Chemical Name: para-Menthane-3,8-diol) the synthesized version of oil of lemon eucalyptus
- **IR3535** (Chemical Name: 3-[N-Butyl-N-acetyl]-aminopropionic acid, ethyl ester)

The following precautions are recommended when using insect repellents:

- Apply repellents only to exposed skin and/or clothing (as directed on the product label.) Do not use repellents under clothing.
- Never use repellents over cuts, wounds or irritated skin.
- Do not apply to eyes or mouth, and apply sparingly around ears. When using sprays, do not spray directly on face—spray on hands first and then apply to face.
- Do not allow children to handle the product. When using on children, apply to your own hands first, and then put it on the child.
- Use just enough repellent to cover exposed skin and/or clothing. Heavy application and saturation are generally unnecessary for effectiveness. If biting insects do not respond to a thin film of repellent, then apply a bit more.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water or bathe. This is particularly important when repellents are used repeatedly in a day or on consecutive days. Also, wash treated clothing before wearing it again. (This precaution may vary with different repellents—check the product label.)
- If you or your child gets a rash or other bad reaction from an insect repellent, stop using the repellent, wash the repellent off with mild soap and water, and call a local poison control center for further guidance. If you go to a doctor because of the repellent-related medical condition, take the repellent with you to show the doctor.

Note that the label for products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus specifies that they should not to be used on children under the age of three years. Other than those listed above, EPA does not recommend any additional precautions for using registered repellents on children or on pregnant or lactating women. For additional information regarding the use of repellent on children visit: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/qa/insect_repellent.htm

Ticks are out!

The long, cold winter and spring in Iowa does not appear to have adversely impacted 2008 Iowa tick populations. So far this year, 80 ticks have been sent in for identification to the Lyme Disease Surveillance Program at Iowa State University (ISU).

- 19 were blacklegged/deer ticks, the vector for Lyme Disease
- 25 were lonestar ticks
- 36 were dog ticks

Prevention is the best method of avoiding tick-borne diseases:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and tuck pants into socks.

- Wear light–colored clothing for easier visualization of ticks.
- Use tick-specific, EPA–approved repellant (e.g., one containing DEET) making sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions. Permethrin-containing repellants are also effective, but should only be used on clothing, as directed on the label.
- Perform regular tick checks at least once a day on yourself and others, including children, especially around the head and neck areas, and on companion animals that have been outside.

To submit a tick for identification, wrap it in tissue, add a blade of grass, and seal it in a zip-top plastic bag.
Mail or bring this to:

Department of Entomology
Lyme Disease Project
436 Science Hall II
Iowa State University
Ames, IA 50011-3222

The Lyme Disease Surveillance Program at ISU recently published a pamphlet on Ticks and Tick-borne Diseases in Iowa. This publication (# PM2036) is freely available for download, or will be sent to interested parties at no charge from Iowa State University Extension Distribution.
For more information, visit: www.ent.iastate.edu/medent
www.extension.iastate.edu/store

Five Ways to go "green" without getting sick- tips for everyday food prep and consumption

1) Conservative use of paper towels
Wash cloths and sponges may seem better for the environment, but they are not good for preventing disease. Even when used with a cleaning product, wash cloths and sponges can lock in germs which may re-contaminate surfaces. Use a durable paper towel, bleach solution (1:100) or other basic surface cleaner to rid your counters of harmful germs.

2) Avoid unnecessary chemicals- an alternative to super cleaners
Super cleaners, or products that kill 99.9% of all germs, also kill the good bacteria. The good germs help inhibit the growth of harmful germs. A simple bleach solution of 1:100 parts bleach to water is effective in cleaning routine household surfaces.

3) It's okay to reuse containers
Reusing containers like those used for cottage cheese is a great way to recycle, but make sure you thoroughly clean all containers before reuse. Optimally all containers should be put through a cycle in the dishwasher before use.

4) **Save your leftovers but reheat well**

Saving leftover food after each meal is a great way to cut down on food waste. Even if you love cold pizza, stick it the microwave and make sure it is thoroughly reheated. That goes for all leftovers! Food left out and then slowly cooled in the refrigerator is a prime breeding ground for bacteria.

5) Portable water options

Even water bottles can serve as a breeding ground for germs if reused for more than one day. Recycle your water bottle each day or better yet buy a reusable bottle and wash it thoroughly each night.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy week!

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