

**EPI Update for Friday, February 20, 2009**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

**Items for this week's EPI Update include:**

- **Influenza activity across Iowa**
- **Quantiferon TB tests**
- **Presidential health**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

**Influenza activity across Iowa**

Influenza activity continues to increase with influenza A(H1N1) being the dominant strain in Iowa and the United States. Iowa isolates have been characterized as A/Brisbane/59/2007-like (H1N1), which is one of the strains in this year's vaccine, as well as one of the recommended strains for next year's vaccine.

The most affected age group in Iowa has been the 5-24 year olds, perhaps because they typically receive the fewest vaccinations and because of the ease of transmission among those of this age. Remember, vaccination of this age group (especially all school age children) is recommended. For more information on current influenza epidemiology in Iowa, go to [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/flu/flu\\_report\\_6.pdf](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/flu/flu_report_6.pdf).

**Quantiferon TB tests**

There is a new alternative to the TB skin test. The University Hygienic Lab now offers Quantiferon TB Gold and Quantiferon TB In-Tube tests. Quantiferon is a blood test that measures and compares the amount of interferon-gamma released by blood cells in response to antigens. Quantiferon TB Gold (QFTBG) assay was FDA approved in 2005; the In-Tube (QFTBIT) assay was released in 2007. The benefit of the QFTBIT assay is a longer time frame available for submission to the testing laboratory, making transport to the lab easier. Collection of the test requires special tubes which UHL provides.

These tests have several advantages over the commonly used tuberculin skin test since they require only one patient visit, and prior BCG vaccination will not cause a false positive on the test.

To order this test, please call UHL (319-335-4500) at least 24 hours prior to collection to arrange for testing and transportation. Specimens are only accepted Monday through Thursday and must arrive before 4 p.m.

**Presidential health**

In commemoration of the recent President's Day, CADE has developed a brief (and hopefully fun) quiz about medical conditions of some famous and not-so-famous leaders. See if you know the answers to these questions about health conditions that are still important today.

1. This U.S. president was disabled by what is now a vaccine-preventable disease. Who was he, and what was the illness? Bonus: This president did not die from his condition. What was his cause of death?
2. Though he lived to be over 65, he died after less than a month in office from an infectious disease contracted on his inauguration day. What was his name, and what was his cause of death?
3. Name this president, a Midwestern native, who lived to his late 80's. His long life is often attributed to his good health habit of daily walking.
4. This president was known for his physical vigor, but was in poor health as a child. He attributed his recovery to clean air and a lot of exercise. Name him and his illness.

If you need help with the answers, watch this space next week!

### **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Long Term Care Infection Prevention & Control Conference will be held on Friday, April 17, 2009 at Iowa Western Community College, Council Bluffs, Iowa. This conference will cover infection prevention and its application in the long term care setting. Further information can be found at [www.goapic.org](http://www.goapic.org).

### **Have a healthy and happy week!**

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