

EPI Update for Friday, August 14, 2009
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology
Iowa Department of Public Health

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Seasonal influenza vaccination beginning now**
- **Use common sense when encountering wildlife**
- **The QFTIT TB gold test**
- **What time is it? – it's State Fair time!!**
- **Weekly novel influenza A(H1N1) update**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Seasonal influenza vaccination beginning now

Vaccination against seasonal influenza should begin now or as soon as seasonal influenza vaccine becomes available. Seasonal influenza vaccine distribution will be phased over several months, and providers should receive part of their pre-booked seasonal influenza vaccine orders this month. Seasonal influenza vaccination efforts by health care providers should be structured to ensure the vaccination of as many persons as possible before seasonal influenza activity in the community begins and should continue throughout the influenza season. Vaccinating for seasonal influenza as soon as the vaccine becomes available, including in September or earlier, might reduce the overlap of seasonal and novel influenza A (H1N1) vaccination efforts.

Seasonal influenza vaccine is highly immunogenic and protection is thought to persist for up to a year. The seasonal influenza vaccines are formulated to prevent annual influenza; they do not protect against novel influenza A (H1N1). Most people need one dose of seasonal influenza vaccine each year; however, children younger than 9 years of age getting seasonal influenza vaccine for the first time - or who were vaccinated for seasonal influenza for the first time last season but only received one dose - should get two doses at least four weeks apart to be protected this season.

Vaccine Information Statements (VISs) are information sheets produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that explain to vaccine recipients, their parents, or their legal representatives both the benefits and risks of a vaccine. Federal law requires that VISs be handed out whenever (before each dose) certain vaccinations are given. VISs for seasonal influenza vaccines can be accessed at the following:

- Inactivated Seasonal Influenza Vaccine
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-flu.pdf
- Live Intranasal Seasonal Influenza Vaccine
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-flulive.pdf

Seasonal influenza vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines, including pneumococcal vaccine. If the live attenuated seasonal influenza vaccine (nasal mist) is not administered simultaneously with other live vaccines (such as Measles/Mumps/Rubella and Varicella), they should be given at least four weeks apart.

For a full review of the seasonal influenza vaccination recommendations, visit www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5808a1.htm

Use common sense when encountering wildlife

Earlier this week, a squirrel in Johnson County tested positive for rabies. Although all mammals are susceptible to rabies, it is highly unusual for small rodents, such as squirrels, to test positive. This event serves as a good reminder that wildlife can pose a human health risk. Following these simple recommendations in respect to wildlife may decrease your chances of coming in contact with a rabid animal:

- Do not feed or handle wild or stray animals. Avoid sick animals or those that act strangely.
- Do not touch or handle dead animals.
- Cover garbage cans and keep pet food indoors to avoid attracting wild animals.
- Do not keep wild animals as pets, which is often illegal as well as dangerous.
- Never handle bats. A bat bite or scratch may be small and go unnoticed. People who awaken to find a bat in the room or children awake or asleep with a bat in a room should consult their health care provider as they may require rabies treatment.

The QFTIT TB gold test

Iowa physicians and public health agencies have an alternative to the TB skin test. The University Hygienic Lab offers an interferon gamma release assay (IGRA). This blood test measures and compares the amount of interferon-gamma (IFN- γ) released by blood cells in response to TB antigens. The IGRA are recommended by CDC as a replacement for the PPD skin test. The major benefits are that only one visit for a blood draw is required; a person who has been vaccinated with BCG can be tested with IGRA without fear of a false positive result which can occur with the PPD test; IGRA results are available in 48-72 hours; there is no reader bias as occurs with the PPD; and there is no booster effect as can occur over multiple PPD's. To order this test call UHL at least 24 hours prior to collection to arrange for testing and transportation. Specimens are only accepted Monday-Thursday and must arrive before 4 p.m.

What time is it? – It's State Fair time!!

Here are a few tips to make your trip to the State Fair safe and enjoyable:

- Drink plenty of water and other non-alcoholic fluids.
- Wear light-weight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes.
- Wash your hands before eating, drinking, and handling baby bottles and pacifiers.
- Wash your hands before and after petting animals or touching animal enclosures.
- Wear sunscreen and insect repellent.

Weekly novel influenza A(H1N1) update

(This new reoccurring section will appear in each issue of the Friday Update)

- IDPH revises the weekly influenza update

In accordance with CDC and WHO recommendations to transition to more population based surveillance and away from counting cases, IDPH has reformatted our weekly influenza surveillance report. The report no longer includes laboratory confirmed cases, but does incorporate additional analysis and regional activity summaries. The Iowa influenza surveillance report is accessible at: www.idph.state.ia.us/h1n1/

- CDC issues interim guidance for detection of novel influenza A (H1N1) virus using rapid influenza diagnostic tests

While rapid influenza diagnostic tests (RIDT) may provide useful information impacting patient care, understanding the limitations of RIDTs is very important. The guidance can be accessed at: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/rapid_testing.htm

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

Save the date:

The 2009 FDA Southwest Region Educational Conference will be held September 29-30 in West Des Moines. The agenda includes a range of presentations on food safety practices and food-borne illness issues. Conference registration is \$105.00 and NEHA Continuing Education credits are available. For more information about this year's agenda or to register, contact Judy Harrison with the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals: judy.harrison@dia.iowa.gov or 515-281-8587.

Save the date:

Novel H1N1 Influenza Sentinel Site – Fall Update!

This free operator-assisted teleconference provides updates on Novel H1N1:

- Overview of novel and seasonal influenza
- Guidelines for testing and result interpretation
- Public health surveillance
- Your role in prevention and control

Date: Wednesday, Aug. 26

- 12 - 1 p.m. Laboratories – Target audience: laboratory staff, lab directors, infection preventionists. Dial in Number: 877.313.6467 Participant Code: 24732341
- 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Health care professionals – Target audience: clinicians, infection preventionists, clinic staff, clinic directors, and public health professionals. Dial in Number: 877.313.6467 Participant Code: 24736628
- 3 - 4 p.m. Schools, childcare and social settings – Target audience: school nurses and administrators, childcare providers, persons

supervising/coordinating social gatherings. Dial in Number: 877.313.6467
Participant Code: 24737355.

No registration is required; one phone line per site.

Save the date:

The Fall Epidemiology Updates are one-day seminars given at six sites throughout Iowa. CADE staff will provide presentations on epidemiologic topics of interest. The updates are intended for local public health staff, infection preventionists, and staff from long term care facilities. The following are the dates and locations of the Fall Updates. Additional details, including an agenda describing topics, will be provided at a later date:

Cherokee	September 17
Marshalltown	September 30
Ottumwa	October 2
Creston	October 6
Cedar Rapids	October 14
Mason City	November 18

Save the date:

Extension Training Program for Infection Prevention Professionals:

This week-long training (October 5-9, 2009) is sponsored by the Program of Hospital Epidemiology Clinical Quality, Safety and Performance Improvement at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City.

For complete details go to:

www.uihealthcare.com/depts/cqspi/newsevents/index.html

Have a healthy and happy week!

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