

**EPI Update for Friday, August 28, 2009**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health**

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Sentinel chicken tests positive for St. Louis encephalitis**
- **Did the rabid Iowa squirrel change our guidance for squirrel and small rodent bites?**
- **Password for ordering rabies vaccine no longer needed**
- **Weekly novel influenza A (H1N1) update**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

**Sentinel chicken tests positive for St. Louis encephalitis**

This week a sentinel chicken in Black Hawk County tested positive for St. Louis encephalitis. (Sentinel chickens are chickens penned in various spots around Iowa, and are bled and tested regularly for mosquito-borne encephalitis viruses). St. Louis encephalitis is a viral disease similar to West Nile virus and is found throughout much of the United States, as well as parts of Canada, the Caribbean, and South America. St. Louis encephalitis virus can be transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito.

This is a good reminder to Iowans that mosquitoes right now are as active as ever. The best way to prevent mosquito-borne diseases is to:

- Use insect repellent with DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Always read the repellent label and consult with a health care provider if you have questions when using these types of products for children. (For example, DEET should not be used on infants younger than 2 months old and oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under 3 years old.)
- Avoid outdoor activities at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, shoes, and socks whenever possible outdoors.
- Eliminate standing water around the home because that's where mosquitoes can breed.
- Empty water from buckets, cans, pool covers and pet water dishes.
- Change water in bird baths every three to four days.

**Did the rabid Iowa squirrel change our guidance for squirrel and small rodent bites?**

No. If people are bitten by squirrels or small rodents (such as hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils, chipmunks, rats, or mice) that were acting normally and the bite was provoked, IDPH does not recommend testing the animal or administering

rabies post-exposure prophylaxis to the person bitten. If the rodent was acting oddly and the bite was unprovoked, IDPH does recommend testing the animal or treating the person bitten if the animal is not available for testing.

IDPH Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology provides 24/7 rabies consultation. During business hours call 800-362-2736, and after hours call 515-323-4360 (this will connect you with the State Patrol who will forward your call to the on-call staff person).

### **Password for ordering rabies vaccine no longer needed**

Sanofi Pasteur has announced that the weekly password to order rabies vaccine is **NO LONGER REQUIRED**. Vaccine can now be ordered from both Sanofi Pasteur and Novartis without passwords for both pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis. (This means you can stop calling us in the middle of the night to get the password... That sound you just heard was a cheer from the on-call epidemiologists! But that said, please do not hesitate to call us if you have rabies questions.)

### **Weekly novel influenza A (H1N1) update**

Novel influenza A (H1N1) Temporary Reporting Requirements: As of September 1, 2009, all novel influenza A (H1N1) associated hospitalizations and deaths must be reported to public health. It is recommended that reports be entered into the Iowa Disease Surveillance System (IDSS). IDPH is finalizing the hospitalization and death reporting forms which will be available in the Epi Manual on the IDPH website at [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/cade.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/cade.asp)

Laboratory Testing Algorithm: The 2009/2010 Surveillance University Hygienic Laboratory (UHL) Influenza testing algorithm for physician offices, clinical labs, and hospital labs and accompanying instructions for specimen submission have been completed and posted in the **Fall 2009 Novel Influenza A (H1N1): Surveillance** folder on the HAN and at [www.uhl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/influenzaalgorithm.pdf](http://www.uhl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/influenzaalgorithm.pdf). This testing algorithm will be used for **ALL** influenza (seasonal and novel influenza A (H1N1)) testing referred to UHL as of September 1, 2009.

Educational seminar: The Iowa Department of Public Health and University Hygienic Laboratory hosted teleconferences this week for laboratories, health professionals, and school and child care groups. Materials from these conferences are available at:

[www.uhl.uiowa.edu/educationoutreach/conferencesevents/influenza](http://www.uhl.uiowa.edu/educationoutreach/conferencesevents/influenza). The teleconference recording will be available in early September.

We are still soliciting comments on the new format of the Iowa Influenza Surveillance Network weekly report. To view the most recent report go to [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/iisn.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/iisn.asp). Contact Meg Harris at: [mharris@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:mharris@idph.state.ia.us) with comments.

**Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

**Save the date:**The 2009 FDA Southwest Region Educational Conference; Held on 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 or to register, contact Judy Harrison with the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals: [judy.harrison@dia.iowa.gov](mailto:judy.harrison@dia.iowa.gov) or call 515-281-8587

**Save the dates:** 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](http://www.uihealthcare.com/depts/cqspi/newsevents/index.html).

**Have a healthy and happy week!**

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