

**EPI Update for Friday, June 25, 2010**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

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

- **Increased campylobacter activity – results of IDPH investigation**
- **Sun safety resources**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

**Increased campylobacter activity – results of IDPH investigation**

Since November 2009, there has been an increase in campylobacter case reports. Currently, the number of campylobacter cases is 46 percent higher than the previous 5 year average. Possible explanations for this increase include an actual increase in illness or an increase in false positive tests due to the use of a new laboratory test approved in June 2009. This new test—a non-culture, lateral-flow monoclonal antibody immunoassay—is of concern because of a low positive predictive value. (Remember, predictive value is determined by the sensitivity and specificity of the test and the prevalence in the population.)

In response to the increased reports, IDPH interviewed Iowans with positive campylobacter tests between March 15, 2010 and May 15, 2010. The goals were to detect any outbreaks that may be occurring, to better understand potential sources of exposure, and to determine the use of the new laboratory test.

There were 88 persons with positive campylobacter tests during this time frame and 42 patients consented to be interviewed. Ages ranged from 1.5 weeks to 88 years; 57 percent were male. Approximately 26 percent reported hospitalization for at least one day. No outbreaks were indentified. The most commonly reported exposures included poultry consumption (22 percent) and drinking raw milk from the patient's own farm (11 percent). Sixteen percent (14/88) had been tested using the new rapid lateral flow test.

To further investigate, the State Hygienic Laboratory is planning to work with CDC and the Association of Public Health Laboratories to compare the four commercially available antigen-based tests to the gold standard of bacterial cultures. This project will occur over the next four months.

**Sun safety resources**

Skin cancer is the most common form cancer in the United States. Nationally, almost 54,000 people were diagnosed with and over 8,400 people died from skin cancer in 2006. Education is critical in reducing skin cancer; please visit

[www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/publications/skin.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/publications/skin.htm) to access educational resources developed by the CDC for use with patients, parents, and caregivers.

Here are some general sun safety recommendations that can be shared as well.

Recommendations for babies less than 6 months old:

- Keep out of direct sunlight by finding shade under a tree, umbrella, or stroller canopy.
- When possible dress in cool clothing that covers the body, such as a hat, lightweight pants, and long-sleeved shirts.
- Wear sunglasses with at least 99 percent UV protection.
- If shade and protective clothing are not available, parents can apply sunscreen on small areas of the body, such as face and backs of hands.

Recommendations for children less than 6 months and adults:

- When possible dress in cool clothing that covers the body. Such as a hat (with at least a 3-inch brim facing forward), lightweight pants, and long-sleeved shirts when in the sun.
- Apply sunscreen to all areas of the body.
- Limit sun exposure between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest.
- Wear sunglasses with at least 99 percent UV protection.

Choosing the right sunscreen:

- Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB.
  - Use sunscreen with at least 15 SPF or higher. The higher the SPF, the more UVB protection the sunscreen has.
    - Look for the UVA “star” rating system on the label. The more stars, the more protection. (A four-star rating provides the highest UVA protection available in an over-the-counter product).
- For sensitive areas, such as the nose, cheeks tops of ears, and shoulders, choose sunscreen with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide.
  - These products stay visible on the skin even after you rub them in and come in a variety of colors.
- Read and follow label instructions for use and reapplication carefully.

For additional information regarding sun safety recommendations, visit

[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) and [www.aad.org/public/sun/smart.html](http://www.aad.org/public/sun/smart.html).

## **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

None

**Have a healthy and happy week!**  
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