

**Epi Update for Friday, May 17, 2019**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

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

- Tick surveillance in Iowa
- *Brucella canis*
- IDPH recommends testing for hepatitis C
- Lead exposure testing reminders
- In the news: Mongolian couple died of plague after eating raw marmot
- In the news: What you need to know about the U.S. measles outbreak
- In the news: To save a girl's life, researchers injected her with genetically engineered viruses
- Infographic: Brush up on dental health
- Meeting announcements and training opportunities

**Tick surveillance in Iowa**

The first six weeks of the new state-wide tick surveillance project in collaboration with veterinarians have been incredibly successful. Of the ticks that have been collected and identified so far, 68% were identified as the American dog tick, 27% as the Deer tick, also known as the Black-legged tick, and 5% as the Lone star tick. All three ticks are known vectors for tick-borne illnesses.

In 2018, 333 cases of tick-borne illness were identified in Iowa. This surveillance serves as a reminder of the importance of preventing tick bites as more time is spent outdoors due to the warmer weather.

For more information on tick-borne illnesses, as well as steps to take to prevent tick bites, visit [idph.iowa.gov/cade/vectorborne-illness#Tick-borne%20diseases](http://idph.iowa.gov/cade/vectorborne-illness#Tick-borne%20diseases).

***Brucella canis***

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship recently announced Canine Brucellosis cases associated with a Marion County commercial dog breeding facility <https://iowaagriculture.gov/news/state-veterinarian-confirms-multiple-cases-canine-brucellosis-central-iowa>.

While rare, people can be infected with *Brucella canis*. People likely get infected when they have contact with vaginal discharge, semen and birthing fluids from infected dogs. People in contact with these types of fluids (like breeders and veterinarians) are at highest risk for being infected.

Rarely, brucellosis can be spread from family pets to people through contact with urine, saliva and other bodily fluids from an infected dog. People who have contact with infected dogs and who are immune compromised are at higher risk for being infected.

Infection in people normally causes a fever, headache, swollen lymph glands, night sweats, joint and muscle aches, fatigue, weight loss, and swollen liver and/or spleen. Other, more serious complications have been reported primarily in immune-compromised people.

The only diagnostic test for *Brucella canis* infection in people is culture. Serologic *Brucella* tests used to identify other *Brucella species* will not detect *B. canis*. Please contact the State Hygienic Laboratory and request to speak with the Microbiology Department if you have any questions or plan to send a suspect culture for rule-out (800)-421-4692.

For additional information visit: <https://idph.iowa.gov/ehi/canine-brucellosis>

### **IDPH recommends testing for hepatitis C**

May is Hepatitis Awareness Month. Over 18,000 Iowans have been diagnosed with chronic hepatitis C and CDC estimates that 45 to 85% of people with hepatitis C are undiagnosed. Two populations of focus for hepatitis C include baby boomers (born between 1945 and 1965) and people who inject drugs or have done so in the past. IDPH recommends these populations be screened for hepatitis C. Testing and diagnosis are critical because hepatitis C is treatable - over 90% are cured after 8 to 12 weeks of treatment.

Injection drug use is the most common way people get hepatitis C. There are several things people who inject drugs can do to prevent hepatitis C transmission, including:

- Use sterile injection equipment every time you inject
- Avoid reusing or sharing drug injection equipment, including syringes, cookers, cottons, water and ties
- Use a spare sterile syringe to split drugs
- Get tested for hepatitis C regularly
- Seek treatment for substance use disorder

For Iowans who inject drugs, free hepatitis C testing can be found at [these locations](#), as well as through the [Iowa Harm Reduction Coalition](#).

For more information about Hepatitis C, visit [www.idph.iowa.gov/hivstdhep/hep/hep-c](http://www.idph.iowa.gov/hivstdhep/hep/hep-c).

### **Lead exposure testing reminders**

The Lead program at IDPH is requesting that medical providers remind their staff to check that the patient's date of birth is correctly submitted to laboratories for blood lead tests and when reporting point-of-care lead tests to IDPH. A review of 2018 data identified a large number of reporting errors. The most common reporting errors were submitting the date of birth as the specimen collection date and substituting the current year for the actual year of birth. Additionally, the patient's address must be included on all blood lead test lab orders and reports.

IDPH is recommending that all children in Iowa be tested for lead exposure at 12, 24 and 36 months of age. Additional testing may be appropriate. However, by only testing at 12 months of age and younger, many potential lead exposures could be missed.

For more information, visit [idph.iowa.gov/Environmental-Health-Services/Childhood-Lead-Poisoning-Prevention](http://idph.iowa.gov/Environmental-Health-Services/Childhood-Lead-Poisoning-Prevention) or contact the Lead Program at 800-972-2026.

**In the news: Mongolian couple died of plague after eating raw marmot**  
[www.livescience.com/65438-mongolian-couple-plague-raw-marmot.html](http://www.livescience.com/65438-mongolian-couple-plague-raw-marmot.html)

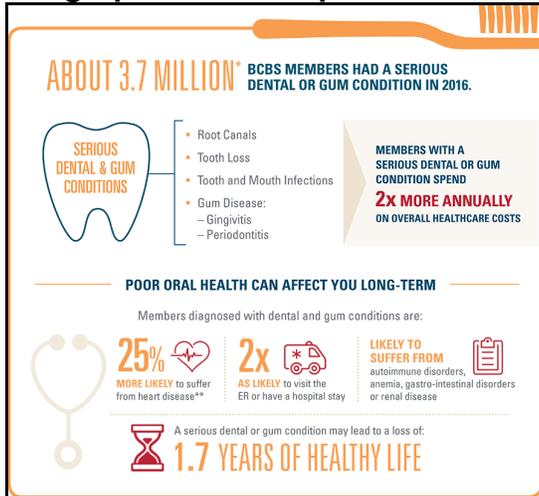
**In the news: What you need to know about the U.S. measles outbreak**

[www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-measles-facts/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-u-s-measles-outbreak-idUSKCN1SJOY?utm\\_source=applenews](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-measles-facts/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-u-s-measles-outbreak-idUSKCN1SJOY?utm_source=applenews)

## In the news: To save a girl's life, researchers injected her with genetically engineered viruses

[www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/article/to-save-a-girls-life-researchers-injected-her-with-genetically-engineered-viruses/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/article/to-save-a-girls-life-researchers-injected-her-with-genetically-engineered-viruses/)

## Infographic: Brush up on dental health



To view in full size, visit

[www.bcbs.com/the-health-of-america/infographics/brush-dental-health](http://www.bcbs.com/the-health-of-america/infographics/brush-dental-health).

## Meeting announcements and training opportunities

IDPH and the Iowa Institute of Public Health Research and Policy will be hosting four regional trainings on childhood lead poisoning prevention: Cedar Falls - July 8, Ainsworth - July 9, Storm Lake - July 22 and Red Oak - July 23. The trainings will be 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. with lunch provided. Aimed at CLPPP contractors, collaborators, medical providers and nurses, each training will include discussion on blood lead testing data, lead educational toolkits for local public health programs and collaborators, education on other sources of lead exposure, and best practices for collaboration and outreach. Please register [here](#). For questions, call 319-384-1243.

## Have a healthy and happy week!

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