



Michigan Department of Community Health, 201 Townsend Street, Lansing, MI 48913
For additional flu information visit: www.michigan.gov/flu

Latest Flu News

TEAM FINDS SECRET THAT COULD STEM FLU VIRUSES

A new article titled "Structural and functional bases for broad-spectrum neutralization of avian and human influenza A viruses" was published in the latest edition of the *Nature Structural & Molecular Biology* journal. Researchers have identified a man-made antibody that recognizes a component of many conventional flu viruses, the 1918 virus and bird flu viruses. The antibody not only recognizes all these virus strains, it neutralizes them by interfering with the virus' ability to infect cells. This finding suggests that in the future it might be possible to end the ritual of the annual flu shot. For further information, click on the following link to the article abstract: <http://www.nature.com/nsmb/journal/vaop/ncurrent/abs/nsmb.1566.html>, or access a news article at: http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/news/newsreleases/2009/flu_mab.htm.

DEATHS IN CHILDREN FROM INFLUENZA COMPLICATIONS

As of the week ending February 14, 2009, nine child deaths from laboratory confirmed influenza-related complications have been reported nationally to CDC for the 2008-09 flu season. Six child deaths from laboratory confirmed influenza-related complications were reported during MMWR week 6 (February 8-14, 2009). Bacterial coinfections were confirmed in six (66.7%) of the nine children: *Staphylococcus aureus* was identified in four (66.7%) of the six children. These deaths are a somber reminder of the importance of protecting children from the flu, especially those at high risk from serious flu-related complications. It also serves as a reminder that vaccination efforts should continue to occur. For more information and CDC talking points on this sensitive issue visit: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Pediatric_Deaths_EXT_TPs_2-20-09_FINAL_268533_7.pdf

ACIP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INFLUENZA

In approving its annual recommendations for flu immunization, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) did not expand the recommendations to any new segments of the population. A year ago, the committee recommended flu immunizations for school-age children, adding about 30 million people to the millions already targeted for flu vaccination. At the last FAB meeting, February 18, 2009, MedImmune,

ACIP RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED

pre-booking of influenza immunizations. For more information contact your influenza manufacturer. For information on the ACIP recommendations visit: <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/bt/anthrax/news/feb2509acip.html>

Flu Surveillance Update

Flu activity throughout Michigan is declining but remains at a high level. The flu activity level remained at "regional" for the week ending February 21, 2009. MDCH labs confirmed 31 influenza cases, bringing the season total to 157: 46 influenza Bs and 111 influenza As (108 A/H1N1s). Sentinel sites reported that the proportion of visits due to influenza-like illness (ILI) slightly decreased to 2.8% overall. Flu activity is still elevated across the nation with thirty-seven states reporting widespread or regional activity.

For additional surveillance information, the MI Flu Focus is archived on www.michigan.gov/flu and the most current edition is included in this email. To find out about influenza activity in the U.S., visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity.htm>

Flu Resources

Access the following links for up-to-date resources:

Michigan's influenza web page: www.michigan.gov/flu

- Seasonal, Pandemic and Avian influenza
- Flu Advisory Board
- Information for Healthcare professionals, community vaccinators, clinical laboratories, families, and businesses

Flu Fighter Action Kit for Health Care Personnel
www.michigan.gov/flufighterkit

CDC influenza web page: www.cdc.gov/flu

MDCH would like to extend an invite for any interested health care professional to become involved in the Flu Advisory Board (FAB). To join FAB, contact Liz Harton, CDC Public Health Advisor at hartone@michigan.gov.

FluBytes is distributed to MDCH flu partners for informational and communication purposes. Please feel free to distribute widely. An archived list of past FluBytes issues can be found at: http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,1607,7-132-2940_2955_22779-125027--,00.html