



# Epi Update for Friday, April 8, 2022

Office of the Public Health Medical Director  
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)  
Bureau of HIV, STD, and Hepatitis

Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's Epi Update include:

- **Salmonella** and Easter chicks
- Tick removal and testing
- STD Awareness Week
- In the news: Fox captured on Capitol Hill after biting 9 people tests positive for rabies
- Infographic: Prevent tick bites!

## **Salmonella and Easter chicks**

*Salmonella* is among the most commonly-reported causes of foodborne illness and outbreaks in Iowa. These bacteria can also be spread by direct contact with animals, especially reptiles and birds. Contact with baby chicks is a known risk factor for *Salmonella* and tends to increase around Easter.

Follow these steps to reduce the risk of *Salmonella* from handling live birds:

- Do not let children less than 5 years of age or others at high risk handle poultry or items contaminated by poultry.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling poultry or their droppings.
- Don't kiss poultry or snuggle them and then touch your face or mouth.
- Do not let poultry live inside your home.
- Do not wash the birds' food and water dishes in the kitchen sink.

For more information visit, [www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/farm-animals/backyard-poultry.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/farm-animals/backyard-poultry.html).

## **Tick removal and testing**

If you find a tick attached to your skin, remove the tick as soon as possible:

1. Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as you can.
2. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick.
3. After removing the tick, clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.
4. Dispose of the tick by flushing it down the toilet. If you would like to bring the tick to your health care provider for identification, put it in rubbing alcohol or place it in a sealed bag/container.

If you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, see your health care provider. You should tell your provider about the recent tick bite, when the bite occurred, and where the tick was most likely acquired.

In general, it is not recommended to test a removed tick for evidence of infection:

- Laboratories that conduct tick testing are not required to have the high standards of quality control used by clinical diagnostic laboratories. Results of tick testing should not be used for treatment decisions.
- Positive results showing that a tick contains a disease-causing organism do not necessarily mean that you have been infected.
- Negative results can lead to false assurance. You may have been unknowingly bitten by a different tick that was infected.
- If you have been infected, you will probably develop symptoms before results of the tick test are available. If you do become ill, you should not wait for tick testing results before beginning appropriate treatment.

For more information about ticks and health risks to humans, visit [www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html).

### **STD Awareness Week**

April 10-16 is National Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) Awareness Week. Now is an important time to take stock of the STD epidemics affecting our communities. Working to raise awareness, make risk reduction easier, and reducing stigma is paramount.

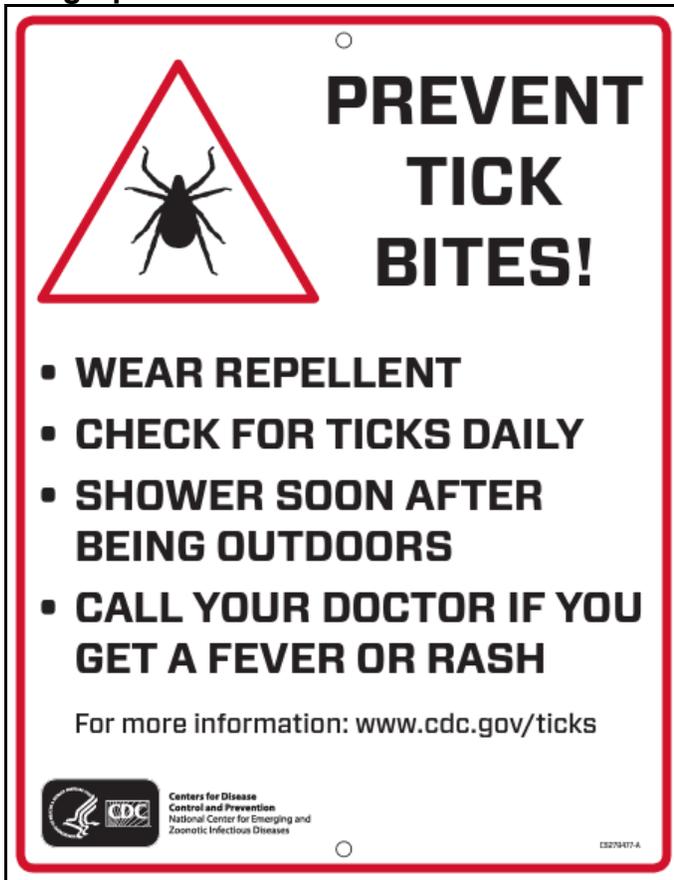
STDs continue to impact a large number of Iowans. In 2021, there were 15,619 cases of chlamydia and 6,404 cases of gonorrhea reported in Iowa. Syphilis reached its highest numbers in a generation. In 2021, there were 751 cases of syphilis reported in Iowa. Of those, 554 were infectious stages (more than a 55% increase from the preceding year). Rates among several racial and ethnic groups are increasingly disproportionate, which speaks to the long and continued impact of social determinants of health on STDs. Although a majority of diagnoses are still among men, the number of cases among women nearly tripled in a single year. The changes with congenital syphilis are even more staggering. Eleven cases met the case definition in 2021 - more than the previous 20 years combined in Iowa.

Given the increases in STDs in the state, health care providers are urged to consider increased testing. Examples include routinely testing patients for chlamydia/gonorrhea and syphilis regardless of gender and conducting syphilis testing at 28 weeks gestation for pregnant persons (in addition to their first prenatal appointment). Bacterial STDs may be asymptomatic or have signs and symptoms that mimic other conditions. Early diagnosis and treatment greatly improves health outcomes for individuals, as well as reduces further transmission in our communities.

For more information about STDs, visit [www.cdc.gov/std](http://www.cdc.gov/std).

**In the news: Fox captured on Capitol Hill after biting 9 people tests positive for rabies**  
[abcnews.go.com/Politics/fox-captured-capitol-hill-biting-lawmaker-ethanized/story?id=83893962](http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/fox-captured-capitol-hill-biting-lawmaker-ethanized/story?id=83893962)

## Infographic: Prevent tick bites!



The infographic is a rectangular sign with a red border. At the top left, there is a black silhouette of a tick inside a red triangle. To the right of the triangle, the text "PREVENT TICK BITES!" is written in large, bold, black capital letters. Below this, there is a list of four bullet points: "WEAR REPELLENT", "CHECK FOR TICKS DAILY", "SHOWER SOON AFTER BEING OUTDOORS", and "CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU GET A FEVER OR RASH". At the bottom left, there is the CDC logo and the text "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases". At the bottom right, there is a small number "13279477-A".

**PREVENT  
TICK  
BITES!**

- **WEAR REPELLENT**
- **CHECK FOR TICKS DAILY**
- **SHOWER SOON AFTER BEING OUTDOORS**
- **CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU GET A FEVER OR RASH**

For more information: [www.cdc.gov/ticks](http://www.cdc.gov/ticks)

 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

13279477-A

To view in full size, visit [www.cdc.gov/lyme/resources/toolkit/2ColorTrailSign.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/resources/toolkit/2ColorTrailSign.pdf).

**Have a healthy and happy week!**

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