



# Epi Update for Friday, October 1, 2021

**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:

- **CDC urges vaccination for pregnant people**
- **Influenza season starts October 3. Help us prevent flu.**
- **September 28: World Rabies Day**
- **In the news: Illinois man dies after catching rabies from an apparent bat bite while he slept at home**
- **Infographic: Protect yourself and your baby from COVID-19. Get vaccinated**

## **CDC urges vaccination for pregnant people**

CDC recently released a health advisory urgently recommending COVID-19 vaccination for people who are pregnant, recently pregnant (including those who are lactating), who are trying to become pregnant, or who might become pregnant in the future.

More than 125,000 COVID-19 cases have been reported in pregnant people, including more than 22,000 hospitalized cases and 161 deaths. The highest number of COVID-19-related deaths in pregnant people in a single month of the pandemic (22) was reported in August. In addition to the risks of severe illness and death for pregnant and recently pregnant people, there is an increased risk for adverse pregnancy and neonatal outcomes, including preterm birth and admission of neonates to an intensive care unit (ICU). Other adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as stillbirth, have been reported.

Despite the known risks of COVID-19, as of September 18, only 31% of pregnant people were fully vaccinated before or during their pregnancy. In addition, there are racial and ethnic disparities in vaccination coverage for pregnant people.

Health care providers should communicate the risks of COVID-19, the benefits of vaccination, and information on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy.

To view the full health advisory, visit [emergency.cdc.gov/han/2021/pdf/CDC\\_HAN\\_453.pdf](https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2021/pdf/CDC_HAN_453.pdf).

### **Influenza season starts October 3. Help us prevent flu.**

The 2021-22 influenza season starts October 3, along with influenza and other respiratory illness-related surveillance activities. IDPH recently hosted the annual influenza webinar, and the slides and recording are available at [idph.iowa.gov/influenza](https://idph.iowa.gov/influenza).

IDPH's weekly influenza reports will resume October 15. IDPH is still looking for schools, hospitals, outpatient health clinics, and laboratories to help with influenza surveillance. For more information, contact Andy Weigel at [andy.weigel@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:andy.weigel@idph.iowa.gov) or 515-322-1937.

Do not count on the 2021-22 influenza season being as mild as the 2020-21 season. Getting an annual influenza vaccine remains the best way to prevent getting influenza. However, it is also important to take other steps to prevent getting sick, including covering your coughs and sneezes, staying home when you are sick, and washing your hands regularly.

For more information about influenza from IDPH, visit [idph.iowa.gov/immtb/immunization/influenza/recommendations](https://idph.iowa.gov/immtb/immunization/influenza/recommendations).

For more information about influenza from CDC, visit [www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/index.html).

### **September 28: World Rabies Day**

September 28 was World Rabies Day, which raises awareness about rabies and brings together partners to enhance prevention and control efforts worldwide. Despite rabies being 100% preventable, more than 59,000 people die from the disease around the world each year.

Although cases in humans are rare, rabies is still present in many parts of the U.S., including Iowa. Due to vaccination of dogs and cats, most human cases of rabies in the U.S. are due to exposure to wildlife. However, any mammal can become infected with rabies and transmit the virus to humans. About one to two dozen animals test positive for rabies each year in Iowa.

Once a person begins showing signs and symptoms of rabies, the disease is nearly always fatal. However, only two cases of rabies in humans have been reported in Iowa since 1951, in large part due to the administration of appropriate post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) after exposure to animals that could potentially transmit rabies.

IDPH is available for consultation regarding potential rabies exposures 24/7/365. Call 515-242-5935 during business hours or 515-323-4360 outside of business hours.

For more information about rabies, visit [idph.iowa.gov/rabies/information-for-providers](https://idph.iowa.gov/rabies/information-for-providers).

### **In the news: Illinois man dies after catching rabies from an apparent bat bite while he slept at home**

[www.cbsnews.com/news/rabies-illinois-bat-bite-death/](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/rabies-illinois-bat-bite-death/)

## Infographic: Protect yourself and your baby from COVID-19. Get vaccinated



**Protect yourself and your baby from COVID-19. Get vaccinated.**

- COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for all people 12 years and older, including people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant, or might become pregnant in the future.
- The benefits of receiving a COVID-19 vaccine outweigh any known or potential risks of vaccination during pregnancy.
- There is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause problems trying to get pregnant.
- COVID-19 vaccination in people who are pregnant or breastfeeding builds antibodies that might protect their baby.

**Ask your provider about the COVID-19 vaccine.**

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)



To view in full size, visit

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/vaccines/protect-yourself-and-your-baby-print.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/vaccines/protect-yourself-and-your-baby-print.pdf)

**Have a healthy and happy week!**

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