



Public Health Messages

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
March 8, 2016

Public Health Messages are a way for the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) to provide information and guidance to medical providers and hospitals on current issues relating to medical care and public health. They are sent out through the Missouri Health Notification System (MOHNS), and go to the same individuals and facilities that receive DHSS Health Alerts and Health Advisories. *Public Health Messages* do not replace Health Alerts and Health Advisories, but rather provide an additional way for DHSS to communicate, in the form of brief messages, with providers and hospitals.

Zika Virus Disease

The first confirmed case of Zika virus infection in a resident of Missouri was reported on March 4. This individual had travelled to a country where active Zika virus transmission is occurring. Because of the number of Missourians who travel to areas of the world where the virus is being transmitted by mosquitoes (and because the virus can also be transmitted sexually), more Zika infections will likely be found in Missouri residents in the future.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) is continuing to provide, through Health Advisories and Health Updates, information and guidance to medical providers on Zika virus disease. It is anticipated that additional updates will be sent out in the future as more knowledge is obtained regarding the virus and the disease manifestations associated with infection. All Health Advisories and Health Updates issued by DHSS are available at <http://health.mo.gov/emergencies/ert/alertsadvories/index.php>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) Zika Website, which contains links to clinical guidance documents and to current information on countries and territories with active Zika virus transmission, is located at <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>.

Questions regarding Zika testing of patients should be directed to DHSS' Bureau of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention at 573-751-6113 or 800-392-0272 (24/7). All other questions on Zika should be directed to DHSS' Office of Veterinary Public Health at 573-526-4780 or 800-392-0272 (24/7).

2016 Recommended Immunization Schedules

Each year, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) together with several professional organizations approves immunization schedules recommended for persons living in the United States. For the current (2016) schedules, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/index.html>.

Changes in the 2016 schedule for persons age birth through 18 years are summarized in "Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Recommended Immunization Schedules for Persons Aged 0 Through 18 Years — United States, 2016," available at http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6504a4.htm?s_cid=mm6504a4_w.

Changes in the 2016 schedule for adults 19 years or older are summarized in "Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Recommended Immunization Schedule for Adults Aged 19 Years or Older — United States, 2016," available at http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6504a5.htm?s_cid=mm6504a5_w.

For further information on immunizations, go to <http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/immunizations/>. Questions should be directed to DHSS' Bureau of Immunizations at 573-751-6124.

Antibiotics and Acute Respiratory Tract Infections in Adults

The American College of Physicians (ACP) and CDC have issued advice for prescribing antibiotics for acute respiratory tract infections (ARTIs) in adults. Go to <http://annals.org/article.aspx?articleid=2481815>.

An accompanying ACP news release states that "inappropriate use of antibiotics for ARTIs is an important factor contributing to the spread of antibiotic-resistant infections, which is a public health threat. . . . Reducing overuse of antibiotics for ARTIs in adults is a clinical priority and a High Value Care way to improve quality of care, lower health care costs, and slow and/or prevent the continued rise in antibiotic resistance."

It is also pointed out that “ARTIs, including the common cold, uncomplicated bronchitis, sore throat, and sinus infection, are the most common reason for doctor’s office visits. According to unpublished CDC data, an estimated 50% of antibiotic prescriptions may be unnecessary or inappropriate in the outpatient setting, which equates to over \$3 billion in excess costs. Antibiotics also are responsible for the largest number of medication-related adverse events and the cause of about one in five visits to emergency departments for adverse drug reactions.”

Questions should be directed to DHSS’ Bureau of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention at 573-751-6113.

Vaccinations Following a Natural Disaster

Are vaccinations needed after a natural disaster? For some persons the answer is yes. Natural disasters such as floods and tornados leave debris, exposing citizens and responders to diseases like tetanus. The major concern is that anyone exposed to unsanitary conditions be up to date with tetanus-containing vaccine, because if an individual is injured (as is common in disaster settings) the injury will likely be contaminated. Other routinely recommended vaccines are recommended for evacuees and responders, just like they are for everyone else. Additional recommendations may apply to displaced persons living in a crowded group setting. For more information and guidance on immunizations after a natural disaster, go to <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/immunizations.asp> .

If an injury occurs, standard wound management care should be undertaken to prevent tetanus. A tetanus-containing vaccine might be recommended for wound management if 5 years or more have elapsed since last receiving a tetanus vaccine. If a tetanus booster is indicated, Tdap is preferred over Td for wound management in adults aged 19 years and older who have not received Tdap previously. For more detailed guidance, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5517.pdf> (page 25).

Although hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for all children aged 12-23 months, evacuation itself is not a specific indication for hepatitis A vaccination of previously unvaccinated children per se unless exposure to hepatitis A virus is suspected. More generally, persons who evacuate their homes under orderly conditions and go to a congregate setting where sanitary conditions prevail should not require hepatitis A vaccine, unless they have been evacuated from an area where exposure to hepatitis A virus is likely or have been exposed to persons with suspected or proven hepatitis A infection. In addition, hepatitis A vaccine is not routinely recommended for responders.

DHSS is able to provide vaccines to local public health agencies following a disaster.

Questions should be directed to DHSS’ Bureau of Immunizations at 573-751-6124.

Recent Health Alerts, Advisories, and Updates Sent Out by DHSS

- DHSS Health Update: Update 5 – Zika Virus Infections – Updates on Cases in Pregnant Women and on Sexual Transmission (February 29, 2016)
- CDC Health Advisory: Update – Interim Guidelines for Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus - United States, 2016 (February 23, 2016)
- DHSS Health Update: Update 4 – Zika Virus Infections – New CDC Guidelines (February 19, 2016)
- DHSS Health Update: Update 3 – Zika Virus Infections (February 5, 2016)
- CDC Health Advisory: Flu Season Begins – Severe Influenza Illness Reported (February 1, 2016)
- DHSS Health Update: Update 2 – Zika Virus Infections (January 27, 2016)
- CDC Health Advisory: CDC Urging Dialysis Providers and Facilities to Assess and Improve Infection Control Practices to Stop Hepatitis C Virus Transmission in Patients Undergoing Hemodialysis (January 27, 2016)

- DHSS Health Update: Update 1 – Zika Virus Infections (January 20, 2016)
- CDC Health Advisory: Recognizing, Managing, and Reporting Zika Virus Infections in Travelers Returning from Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and Mexico (January 16, 2016)

These, along with previous Health Alerts, Advisories, and Updates, can be accessed by going to <http://health.mo.gov/emergencies/ert/alertsadvisories/index.php> .