

Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

THE PUBLIC HEALTH PRESS



Health Health Disease
~Protection * Education * Prevention~

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~An Active Member of the Dickinson-Iron County Community Collaboratives~

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Our Mission

“To assure the highest possible level of health for the people of the communities we serve.”

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Health Department Prepares for Pandemic Flu

(By Sheila McNulty, EP Coordinator)

The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department is strengthening emergency plans and procedures for responding to any influenza pandemic threat that may develop. Pandemic flu response is primarily local and the magnitude of a pandemic will tax the resources of our community, so we are working closely with our community response partners to enhance pandemic response plans.

We have long-term experience in successfully stopping smaller outbreaks of disease, and we've been planning, training, and exercising our mass vaccination and medication dispensing clinic plans. On May 9, 2006, emergency response personnel from Dickinson, Iron, Delta and Menominee Counties participated in a pandemic influenza table-top exercise. During the exercise, participants demonstrated their agency role in supporting a coordinated emergency response to a pandemic. Many lessons were learned allowing emergency response personnel to improve pandemic preparedness plan-

ning and response.

We ask that residents support emergency response planning by learning the facts about pandemic influenza and taking simple, common-sense steps. These include keeping a supply of food and prescription medications on hand, staying home when you're sick, and washing your hands frequently. Additional information can be obtained on the health department's website at www.didhd.org.

What is an Influenza Pandemic?

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza A virus emerges for which there is little or no immunity in the human population, begins to cause serious illness and then spreads easily person-to-person worldwide.

Historically, the 20th Century Saw Three Pandemics of Influenza:

- 1918 influenza pandemic caused at least 675,000 U.S. deaths and up to 50 million deaths worldwide

- 1957 influenza pandemic caused at least 70,000 U.S. deaths and 1-2 million deaths worldwide

- 1968 influenza pandemic caused about 34,000 U.S. deaths and 700,000 deaths worldwide

Characteristics and Challenges of a Pandemic

When a pandemic influenza virus emerges, its global spread is considered inevitable.

Preparedness activities should assume that the entire world population would be susceptible.

Countries might, through measures such as border closures and travel restrictions, delay arrival of the virus, but cannot stop it.

Health Care Systems Overloaded

Most people have little or no immunity to a pandemic virus. Infection and illness rates soar. A substantial percentage of the world's population will require some form of medical care.

(Cont. on page 2)

New Tool Helps Citizens Prepare for Public Health Emergencies

The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department is providing a public health emergency booklet free of charge to Dickinson and Iron County residents that outlines preparedness steps for public health emergencies.

The passport size booklet created by the Michigan Department of Community Health, Office of Public Health Preparedness contains useful emergency preparedness tips and a fill-in-the-blank area to record personal health information necessary for receiving medical services during an emergency.



The booklet outlines many things individuals can do to be prepared for public health emergencies. Some of the guidance includes:

- Discuss with your family the types of disasters most likely to happen and what each family member should do.
- Your family may not be together when disaster strikes. Plan how you will contact one another.
- Keep some essential supplies on hand for emergencies: drinking water, dry or canned food, a battery-powered radio, first aid supplies, a flashlight and batteries, prescription medication, and special items for babies and family members with special needs.



Please contact Sheila McNulty, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, at 906-779-7205 or at samcnulty@hline.org to obtain the booklet. Additional emergency preparedness information can be found on the department's website at www.didhd.org.

Health Department Prepares for Pandemic Flu

(Cont. from front page)

Nations unlikely to have the staff, facilities, equipment and hospital beds needed to cope with large numbers of people who suddenly fall ill.

Death rates are high, largely determined by four factors: the number of people who become infected, the virulence of the virus, the underlying characteristics and vulnerability of affected populations and the effectiveness of preventive measures.

Past pandemics have spread globally in two and sometimes three waves.

Medical Supplies Inadequate

- The need for vaccine is likely to outstrip supply.
- The need for antiviral drugs is also likely to be inadequate early in a pandemic.
- A pandemic can create a shortage of hospital beds, ventilators and other supplies. Surge capacity at non-traditional sites such as schools may be created to cope with demand
- Difficult decisions will need to be made regarding who gets antiviral drugs and vaccines.



Economic and Social Disruption

- Travel bans, closings of schools and businesses and cancellations of events could have major impact on communities and citizens.
- Care for sick family members and fear of exposure can result in significant worker absenteeism.

Communications and Information are Critical Components of Pandemic Response

Education and outreach are critical to preparing for a pandemic. Understanding what a pandemic is, what needs to be done at all levels to prepare for pandemic influenza, and what could happen during a pandemic helps us make informed decisions both as individuals and as a nation. Should a pandemic occur the public must be able to depend on its government to provide scientifically sound public health information quickly, openly and dependably. For additional information on pandemic influenza visit: www.pandemicflu.gov.

Source: Centers for Disease Control

Vaccines and the Diseases they Prevent

Vaccines for Adolescents

Help keep adolescents healthy and safe with immunizations

We think this is important for you to know...

New vaccines have recently become available and are recommended for all adolescents—meningococcal and pertussis vaccines. Three other vaccines (hepatitis B, varicella, and measles-mumps-rubella) are recommended for adolescents who did not receive them as children. Immunization has the potential to protect not only the health of adolescents but their friends, families, and communities.

Administering vaccines can be easy and inexpensive when delivered as part of a preventive visit to a healthcare provider. For families with health insurance, all or most of the cost is usually covered. Lower income families may be eligible to get the vaccines at no cost through a program called Vaccines For Children (VFC). To learn more about the VFC program, visit the website

www.cdc.gov/nip/vfc/Default.htm

or contact your state VFC coordinator listed at

www.cdc.gov/nip/vfc/contacts_vfc_coord.htm

Immunizations can prevent many of the diseases that pose serious threats to adolescents.

PERTUSSIS (WHOOPIING COUGH)

- Highly contagious with prolonged cough. If transmitted to infants, may be life-threatening
- **NEW VACCINE:** Tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis vaccine (Tdap) adds pertussis disease protection while maintaining tetanus and diphtheria protection.
- Adolescents 11–18 years of age should receive a single shot of Tdap. Adolescents who received tetanus-diphtheria booster (Td) should receive Tdap 5 years after they received Td.

MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTIONS

- Extremely serious disease that can rapidly progress to meningitis, pneumonia, and death
- **NEW VACCINE:** Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) provides protection against these infections.
- Adolescents should receive a single shot of this vaccine during their 11–12 year old check-up or when they enter high school or college. *(Updated information continued on back)* →

HEPATITIS B

- Can cause different kinds of liver disease, including cancer
- Adolescents who did not receive the hepatitis B vaccine during childhood should receive the three-shot course of this vaccine.

VARICELLA (CHICKENPOX)

- Highly contagious and can be a serious and sometimes life-threatening disease
- Adolescents who have not had chickenpox or the vaccine should receive this vaccine at their 11–12 year old check-up. If anyone is uncertain about having had the disease, a blood test can determine immunity.

MEASLES, MUMPS & RUBELLA

- Historically among the most serious vaccine-preventable diseases
- Adolescents who did not receive the two-shot course of measles-mumps-rubella vaccine (MMR) during childhood should receive this vaccine at their 11–12 year old check-up.

ADDITIONAL VACCINES

Some adolescents with specific health risks may need additional vaccines such as hepatitis A, influenza, and pneumococcal.



For more information on vaccines, visit our website or the CDC Contact Center:
www.cdc.gov/nip • cdcinfo@cdc.gov • 800-CDC-INFO (232-4636) in English, en español – 24/7

SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE™

“Public Health: Managing Disease Outbreaks on the Front Line.”

**DICKINSON-IRON DISTRICT
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

601 Washington Ave.
Iron River, MI 49935
and
818 Pyle Drive
Kingsford, MI 49802

Phone:
(906) 265-9913
(906) 774-1868

Fax:
(906) 265-2950
(906) 774-9910

E-mail: rumpf@hline.org

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Linda Piper,
Acting Health Officer

Kelly Rumpf, Editor
Health Educator

Vaccines for Adolescents

(Cont. from pg. 3)

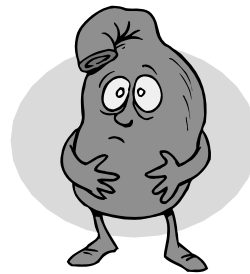
Note: Due to a limited supply of the MCV4 vaccine, the CDC has stated that until further notice, administration of MCV4 to persons aged 11-12 years should be deferred. The CDC and ACIP recommend that providers continue to vaccinate adolescents at high school entry and college freshmen living in dormitories.

If you would like more information or to schedule an appointment for immunizations contact your healthcare provider or the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department at (906) 774-1868 or (906) 265-9913.

Wellness Fun Facts

**Few Americans Follow the
“Big Four” Habits to
Prevent Heart Disease**

A recent national survey shows that only 3 percent of U.S. adults practice all of the “big four” habits to help prevent heart disease: eating a healthy diet, getting regular physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight, and not smoking.



Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

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ADMINISTRATION**

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Acting Health Officer/
Community Health Services Director

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