Watching Closely: Flu Surveillance

The Iowa Influenza Surveillance Network (IISN) is made up of physicians, schools, child care centers, businesses, and long-term care facilities who track the occurrence of influenza-like illness. Detailed, weekly IISN reports summarize flu activity in the state (as well as the nation and the world) and include Iowa data on hospitalizations and school absences.

Iowa Department of Public Health (Iowa Influenza Surveillance Network Reports) - www.idph.state.ia.us/IdphArchive/Archive.aspx?channel=FluReports

Viruses Can Be Frequent Fliers Too

Air travel involves large numbers of people in close quarters, so it's not surprising that the CDC's concern for the spread of influenza results in special guidelines for workers in the commercial airline industry. Although the CDC recommends not flying until at least 24 hours after a flu-like illness (identified mainly by fever) has resolved, people won't or can't always follow that advice. As a passenger, you might be asked to move to physically separate an ill person. If you are the ill passenger, you could be asked to wear a mask.

CDC (Interim Guidance for Management of Influenza-Like Illness aboard Commercial Aircraft) - www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/air-crew-dom-intl.htm/?date=113009

Sleep Insufficiency

Wouldn't a public health problem that affects 50-70 million people be considered serious? That's the number of Americans with chronic sleep and wakefulness disorders. According to this CDC report, healthcare providers should consider adding an assessment of chronic rest or sleep insufficiency to routine office visits so as to make needed interventions or referrals to sleep specialists.

CDC (Perceived Insufficient Rest or Sleep Among Adults-United States, 2008) - www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5842a2.htm?s_cid=mm5842a2_e

Respiratory Protection Video

"A surgical mask is not a respirator," even if both help prevent hazardous exposures. The differences are clearly presented this 5-minute OSHA video.

OSHA - www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovSLAuY8ib8

DOL and OSHA 2010 Priorities

US Department of Labor Secretary Hilda L. Solis's goal of "good jobs for everyone" is the basis for her agency's plan that includes 12 outcomes, such as narrowing wage inequality or providing workplace flexibility for care-giving. OSHA also recently identified 9 major project areas for 2010 that demonstrate their commitment to worker protection (among them cranes and derricks, combustible dust, and beryllium).

OSHA (Fall 2009 Regulatory Priorities) - www.osha.gov/dsg/2009regulatory-priorities.html

UI HealthWorks is a member of the WORKSAFE IOWA Occupational Medicine Associate Network, the only university-affiliated network of occupational health providers. WORKSAFE IOWA is an outreach program of the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health in the College of Public Health at the University of Iowa (www.public-health.uiowa.edu/worksafe).