



Health Notes



By Glennah Trochet, MD

Rabies Vaccine

A rabies vaccine shortage in the US is likely to persist for several months. The State Department of Public Health is requesting we only use vaccine for post exposure prophylaxis, and delay pre-exposure vaccination. To obtain vaccine for post exposure, the physician must call the local health department. On agreement that rabies vaccine is indicated, a password is used to order the vaccine from one of the two manufacturers. The Sacramento County Health Department telephone is (916) 875-5881.

West Nile Virus

So far this year, 17 West Nile Virus infections reported to the Sacramento County Public Health Division have been confirmed. Of this number, 3 are asymptomatic blood donors, 6 people had the diagnosis of West Nile Fever and 8 had Neuroinvasive West Nile, such as encephalitis or paralysis. Two additional cases are pending confirmation. One person died of suspected West Nile, but it was not confirmed prior to death, so is not included in this count. Please remind all your patients to protect themselves from mosquito bites.

Influenza Surveillance

Influenza season is upon us. We are seeking physicians and clinics willing to be sentinel practices, helping with influenza virus surveillance. If you are interested, please call Melissa Dahlke at (510) 620-3494 or e-mail the State Immunization branch at flu@cdph.ca.gov.

Flu Vaccinations for Healthcare Workers

A law has gone into effect in California requires that all healthcare workers obtain the influenza vaccine or sign a waiver saying why they refuse it. Please remind your staff to get vaccinated in order to protect themselves, patients and family.

Disposal of Sharps

Beginning in September it was no longer legal to dispose of used sharps in household waste, even in a closed rigid container. The Sacramento County Waste Management web site offers information on options: <http://www.sacgreenteam.com>.

trochetg@saccounty.net

Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society
5380 Elvas Avenue #100 • Sacramento, CA 95819
916.452.2671 PH • 916.452.2690 FX • Email: info@ssvms.org

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