



Iowa Department of Public Health Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology

Vaccine recommendations during and after flooding

When flooding occurs, many people wonder if they need extra vaccines: fortunately the answer is no.

The fact that flooding is occurring does NOT increase your risk of getting sick from diseases like hepatitis A, tetanus and hepatitis B. Even if you are working or wading in flood waters or cleaning up after the flood waters have receded, your chance of getting these diseases is no greater than usual.

However, everyone at all times should be up-to-date on all their recommended vaccines, including when flooding is occurring.

All Iowa adults should be routinely vaccinated against:

- tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis; everyone should receive basic series of immunizations during early childhood then a booster shot every 10 years
- influenza; should receive a shot every year in the fall

All adults should also ensure that they had received routine childhood vaccinations against measles, mumps rubella (MMR vaccine), polio, and chickenpox (unless they had the actual disease as child).

There are also special vaccines for people with specific risks; for example hepatitis B vaccine for health care workers, and meningococcal vaccine for travelers to parts of Africa.

At any time, including during disasters like flooding, if you sustain a skin injury (your skin is cut or punctured) you should seek medical care for that wound. You may need to take antibiotics or receive tetanus shots.

If you have any questions about immunizations, call your healthcare provider, local health department or the immunization program at the Iowa Department of Public Health at 800-831-6293.