

Confirmed Case of H1N1 in New York Dog

(*Courtesy AVMA*) On December 21, IDEXX Laboratories has confirmed 2009 H1N1 influenza virus in a dog in Bedford Hills, New York. A 13-year old dog became ill after its owner was ill with confirmed 2009 H1N1 influenza. The dog was lethargic, coughing, not eating, and had a fever. Radiographs (x-rays) showed evidence of pneumonia. The dog was treated with intravenous fluids, antibiotics, nebulization and other supportive care, and was discharged from the hospital after 48 hours of care. It is currently recovering. Tests submitted to IDEXX Laboratories were negative for canine influenza (H3N8) but positive for 2009 H1N1 influenza. The results were confirmed by the Iowa State Laboratory. Read the [press release](#) and the [case notes](#).

The AVMA is updating their online [2009 H1N1 resources](#) as they get information.

H1N1 Information from the Illinois Department of Public Health

Veterinarians may wish to encourage H1N1 vaccination of staff. A USDA website on H1N1 includes a [table of animals testing positive](#) for H1N1 at NVSL. The table shows that in a number of instances, animals became ill following contact with persons with influenza-like illness indicating that persons can be a source of H1N1 for animals.

One method to decrease the risk of transmission of H1N1 from veterinary employees to animals is for persons in contact with clinic animals to receive H1N1 vaccine. This vaccine is now available to anyone who is interested in receiving the vaccine depending on availability in your area. Please use the [Illinois Department of Public Health website](#) (or call your local health department) to identify sites of H1N1 vaccination in your area and consider informing persons at your facility who have animal contact about the availability of H1N1 vaccination. Many of these same sites will also provide seasonal flu vaccination. Seasonal flu vaccine and H1N1 vaccine are two different vaccines.

There are other ways to decrease transmission of influenza in the workplace (see http://www.idph.state.il.us/h1n1_flu/sf_business.htm).

Research has shown that one of the most powerful weapons against the spread of respiratory illness, including any strain of influenza, is simply improving hand hygiene. The following steps are recommended to prevent transmission of disease in the work place.

Keep the work environment clean and make sure cleaning supplies are available.

- Clean frequently touched surfaces, including door knobs and stair rails, and commonly shared items at least daily and when visibly soiled.
- Use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered disinfectant labeled for activity against bacteria and viruses or a bleach solution. Always follow label instructions. If bleach solution is used, mix ¼ cup chlorine bleach with 1 gallon of cool water; prepare fresh solution daily and use within 24 hours.
- Clean shared work areas such as desktops and tables between each shift or more often if possible.
- Discourage sharing of telephones if possible; if sharing is unavoidable telephones should be cleaned between shared use.
- Remind staff to clean their hands (i.e., hand washing with soap and water or use of an alcohol-based hand gel) after cleaning and disinfecting environmental surfaces and items.

Remind staff to clean hands frequently.

- Ensure that restrooms are supplied with soap and paper towels or working hand dryers.
- Advise staff to clean their hands frequently. Staff should wash hands with soap and water frequently and whenever visibly soiled. Alcohol-based hand gels (containing at

least 60% alcohol) should be used when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty. Staff should wash hands before meals and after using the restroom.

- Remind staff that frequent hand cleaning will help protect them from germs. When washing hands, use soap and warm water and wash for 20 seconds. If paper towels are available, use paper towel to turn off the faucet.

Remind staff to cover their noses and mouths when sneezing or coughing.

- If coughing or sneezing, advise staff to use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth or cough or sneeze into their sleeve. Tissues should be discarded in the trash.
- Provide conveniently located trash receptacles so that used tissues can be promptly discarded.
- Encourage staff to wash their hands or use an alcohol-based hand gel as soon as possible, if they have sneezed or coughed on their hands. Hands also should be cleaned after using tissues.
- Post the "Cover Your Cough" poster in restrooms, break rooms and work areas as a visual reminder of appropriate hygiene practices.

Employers Now Responsible for Reporting H1N1 Work-related Illness

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has determined that work-related H1N1 infection is now reportable, unlike seasonal flu. This update and other information on the H1N1 virus outbreak are posted on the [AVMA's H1N1 Resources web page](#).

A pandemic preparedness guide is also available on the [AVMA website](#).

Dean Herbert Whiteley to Participate in Hockey Night - Please Vote in Poll to Determine What Kind of "Ice Time" He Gets!

Dean Whiteley is a former hockey player and coach. After the ISVMA CE program on January 23, 2009 (*see article above*), participants and their families have been invited to join us for a professional hockey game between the Peoria Rivermen and the Chicago Wolves.

Dean Whiteley has been invited to either: 1) drop the puck for the ceremonial opening faceoff; or 2) take a shot at scoring a goal during intermission. The Dean has agreed to let our members decide - and no, the penalty box isn't an option! If you would like to vote in the poll, please vote in our [online poll](#)!

ISVMA Sponsored Practice Ownership Workshop and Hockey Night - Join Us January 23, 2010

The ISVMA is hosting a continuing education program designed specifically for veterinarians thinking about buying a practice or transitioning into ownership. The program will be held at the Peoria Civic Center on Saturday, January 23, 2010 from 3:00pm-6:00pm and provide 3 hours of CE credit.

[Additional information and registration](#) is available online now. *You must login to the ISVMA Member Center to register.* Please register early so that we can hold back the appropriate number of tickets for the hockey game!

USDA Accreditation Reminder

All veterinarians accredited prior to February 1, 2010 will be required to re-apply in order to continue their accreditation status in the revised program which goes into effect on February 1, 2010. The revised USDA Accreditation program changes allow a 6 MONTH WINDOW to re-apply. Those who do not apply within this timeframe will have their accreditation status expire. The USDA anticipates having the new application ready for publication on February 1, 2010.

IRAs and Charitable Contributions

On October 3, 2008, President Bush signed into law the charitable IRA legislation (effective for 2008

and 2009), which allows donors who are 70 ½ or older to contribute up to \$100,000 per year from their IRA directly to an eligible charity without having to pay income taxes on the money. A couple with separate IRAs could each give up to that amount. Note that the withdrawal must go directly from the IRA to the charity. Individuals who are required to take unneeded IRA withdrawals, and others who have experienced limitations on tax benefits in the past, will find the new law of particular interest. The donor does not need to itemize his or her taxes to take advantage of the rollover. If the donor does itemize, however, he or she cannot also take the contribution as a deduction. Contact your tax advisor for more details.

About the Photo

The [Red-bellied Woodpecker](#) is a medium sized bird measuring approximately 10 inches from beak to tail. Its back and wings are distinctly barred in black and white. There is some variation in the chest and belly but all are pale in color. The colors can range from buff to grey or even a pale pink. The only clear distinction between the male and female is the red crown. Males have reddish marking around its bill and a red crown that extends to the nape of its neck. The female will have red markings on her nape but the red crown is absent. Both the male and the female have sharp, silver-grey beaks.

It is odd that the Red-bellied Woodpecker is named for its red belly when in truth the faint blush on its belly is rarely seen, but it is an easy bird to identify. The reddish blush on the back of the head and its zebra strips are distinctive.

Like most woodpeckers, the male Red-bellied Woodpecker drums to catch the attention of a potential mate. It will drum on hollow limbs of trees, utility poles, chimneys, even gutters. The more the material resonates, the better.

These birds often stick to main branches and trunks of trees, where they hitch in classic woodpecker fashion, leaning away from the trunk and onto their stiff tail feathers as they search for food hiding in bark crevices. When nesting, males choose the site and begin to excavate, then try to attract a female by calling and tapping softly on the wood around or in the cavity. When a female accepts, she taps along with the male, and then helps put the finishing touches on the nest cavity.

The Red-bellied Woodpecker is an omnivore. The bulk of its diet is made up of beetles, grasshoppers, ants and other insects. They bore into the bark of dead trees for some but readily search the ground for others. It will also feed on acorns, beechnuts, seeds, and fruit. When the weather is cold and the insects scarce, they have no qualms about belling up to the birdfeeder. Like many of the North American woodpeckers, the Red-bellied Woodpecker will squirrel away food for the lean and mean days of winter.

Red-bellied Woodpeckers are common in many Eastern woodlands and forests, from old stands of oak and hickory to young hardwoods and pines. They have also adapted well to suburban life and will often appear at backyard feeders that offer sunflowers, suet and fruit.

I photographed this male Red-bellied Woodpecker at a feeder in Moline, IL in April 2006.

Contact Us

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