

The Infection Connection

LAWRENCE-DOUGLAS COUNTY
Health Department

www.ldchealth.org

Number of tick-related illnesses up this year

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department has investigated a significantly higher number of tick-related illnesses this year. There have been cases of Ehrlichiosis, Lyme, Tularemia and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF).

The most frequently reported illness has been RMSF. Signs and symptoms include fever, chills, severe headache, malaise, myalgia, gastrointestinal symptoms, cough, altered mental status and focal neurologic deficits. A rash typically appears between two and five days after onset of fever, but may not develop until late in the disease process.

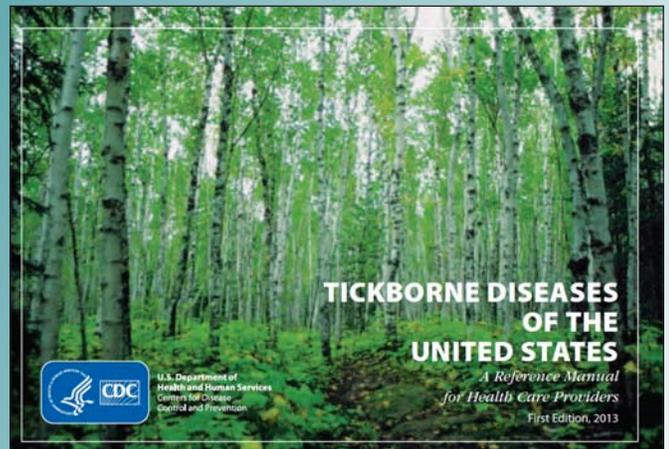
To learn more about tick-borne



disease, Communicable Disease nurse Shirley Grubbs recommends a new publication from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that is written specifically for health care professionals.

It can be found online at <http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/resources/TickborneDiseases.pdf>.

The publication includes the agent of each tick-borne disease, incubation periods, signs and symptoms of each disease, general laboratory findings, lab confirmatory tests and effective medications with dosages. It also includes maps where the disease is typically found, pictures of various types of ticks and what diseases they transmit.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has produced a new publication about ticks and tick-related diseases for health care professionals.



Public health nurses Shirley Grubbs, left, and Ashley Halton prepare immunizations to administer to clients at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. The Health Department provides about 6,000 vaccines annually.

Vaccines not free at Health Department, but residents can qualify for reduced rates

The Health Department offers a variety of immunizations — childhood, adult, international travel and flu — but, they are NOT free.

There is a \$14 administration fee for all immunizations, and then the prices can vary from \$40 for a Hepatitis A vaccine to \$163 for a Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella (MMRV). However, Douglas County residents may qualify to receive immunizations at a reduced cost through state and

federal programs administered by the Health Department. “These programs give our adult clients access to vaccines they might otherwise not have received, similar to the Vaccine For Children’s Program (VFC) for kids that don’t have insurance or insurance doesn’t pay for immunizations,” Clinic Supervisor Kathy Colson said. In May, a client received four vaccines that would have cost him \$298, but instead he paid \$56 because he qualified for a

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Community needs to work together in nontraditional ways to improve health

BY DAN PARTRIDGE
Director of Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department

At the Health Department, we are increasingly turning our attention towards strategies to address chronic disease.

It’s no exaggeration to call growing rates of chronic disease an epidemic. According to

the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report “For the Public’s Health: Investing in a Healthier Future,” in 2007 and 2008, 23 percent of U.S. adults reported having one chronic medical condition, and an additional 31 percent reported having two or more. This accounts for over half of the U.S. population. The same

report indicated that, “The indirect costs associated with preventable chronic diseases — costs related to diminished labor supply and worker productivity and the resulting fiscal drag on the nation’s economic output — have

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Douglas County Disease Report

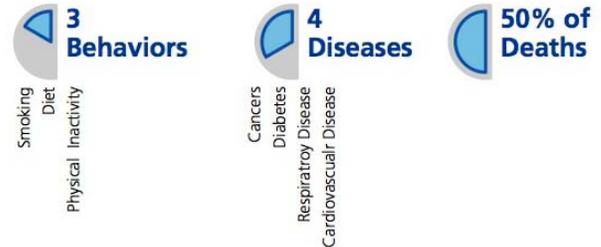
Disease category	Disease name	April 13	May 13	June 13	Total
Enteric	Campylobacteriosis	0	2	2	4
	Giardia	1	0	1	2
	Salmonella	1	0	3	4
	STEC	0	0	1	1
General	Hepatitis B, acute	1	0	0	1
	Hep B, chronic	2	1	2	5
	Hep B, pregnancy	1	0	0	1
	Hepatitis C, chronic	3	5	5	13
	Strep Pneumo, invasive	0	0	1	1
	Strep A, Invasive	1	0	1	2
Vector	Ehrlichiosis	0	0	2	2
	Lyme disease	0	0	1	1
	RMSF	0	1	5	6
	Tularemia	0	1	1	2
Vaccine-preventable diseases	Mumps	1	0	0	1
	Pertussis	0	1	1	2
	Varicella	4	3	0	7
STDs (tested at HD only)	Chlamydia	9	12	10	31
	Gonorrhea	1	4	3	8

This report includes the number of cases investigated by the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. Case classifications include: Confirmed, probable and suspect.

Health Plan addresses costly chronic disease

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been estimated at over \$1 trillion a year.” We simply can’t afford to not address this problem. But where do we start?

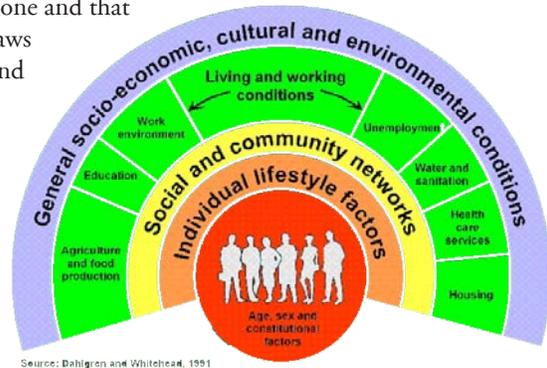


A growing number of health experts believe an important place to start is to address the behaviors that drive chronic disease. These three behaviors – physical inactivity, poor diets and tobacco use – are key risk factors for four diseases – cancers, Type 2 diabetes, respiratory diseases, and heart disease – that are responsible for 50 percent or more of all deaths worldwide.

The IOM report cited above argues that population-based prevention efforts can improve American’s health more efficiently than clinical care alone and that

public policy and laws informed by data and quality metrics are needed to improve physical and social environments, which lead to better health.

The basis for this viewpoint is best illustrated in this diagram — best known as the determinants of health model.



best known as the determinants of health model.

We know that promoting individual behavior change through one-on-one interventions alone has not, and will not, create better health outcomes. If we are to curb the cost of health care we must address the determinants of health, (e.g. poverty, education, our natural and built environment and social/family networks).

It is critical that we understand how social and community networks, living and working conditions, and general socio-economic conditions interact with clinic practice. To understand our community’s viewpoint on this issue, I encourage you to read “Roadmap to a Healthier Douglas County,” our recently published community health plan. It’s available on our website at www.ldchealth.org. This plan was developed with input from more than 1,500 Douglas County residents and lays out proposed strategies to address root causes of disease such as poverty, physical activity, nutrition, and access to health services.

Ask yourself, where do I see myself in this plan? How can I contribute? On the Community Health Plan web page, look for information about how to get engaged, or contact our Director of Community Health, Chris Tilden, at ctilden@ldchealth.org or 856-7312. Let’s embrace the IOM’s case for working together in nontraditional ways and chart a course for success in our community.

Vaccines not free at Health Department

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new vaccine program.

Following is a list of vaccines that the Health Department offers to adults, ages 19 and older, for \$14 if they meet specific guidelines:

- **Tdap**— Requirements are uninsured and income of 200 percent of federal poverty level or below, which is \$22,980 annually for one person or \$47,100 for family of four.
- **MMR, PPV 23 (Adult Pneumonia) and Varicella**—uninsured but broader financial guidelines
- **Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Twinrix (Hepatitis A and B combo)** — uninsured, income of 200 percent of federal poverty level or below, and proof of income.
- **Meningitis** — uninsured and attending a secondary education (includes technical training) school. This vaccine typically costs \$100.

24-7 EPI hotline

To alert the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department to a reportable disease after hours, please use this number: 785-856-7305.

Laughter is the best medicine

