

# The Infection Connection

**LAWRENCE-DOUGLAS COUNTY**  
**Health Department**  
[www.ldchealth.org](http://www.ldchealth.org)

## Tuberculosis case affects Douglas County

### Seven Kansas counties involved in active case

There is an active tuberculosis case in a South Central Kansas county with ramifications for Douglas County.

The active case of tuberculosis (TB) had contact with at least 19 individuals in Douglas County during the infectious period. The active case had been coughing for approximately two years at the time of diagnosis.

A Kansas Department of Health and Environment disease intervention specialist interviewed several people in Douglas County for contact tracing. Several of the contacts were University of Kansas students.



The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department offers testing for tuberculosis. It provides about 800 tests each year.

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department and KU's Watkins Memorial Health Center have been testing contacts. Currently, several individuals who tested positive are receiving medications for TB infection (also known as latent TB). One

of the individuals is taking a new 12-week treatment at the Health Department.

Several conference calls have been held among health leaders in the affected seven counties. Currently, Douglas County has the most contacts to the active case.

## Health Department offers new 12-dose treatment for TB

There is a new 12-dose regimen to treat tuberculosis (TB) infection, also known as latent TB, and it's available at the Health Department. The new regimen, referred to as 3HP, represents a major advancement in preventing future cases of TB.

The new treatment is a regimen of isoniazid and rifampine given in 12 weekly doses under directly observed therapy. The new regimen reduces the required treatment from 270 daily doses over nine months to 12 weekly doses over three months.

Target populations for use of the 3HP regime are:

- Recent contacts of active cases.
- High-risk patients who may not be in the same



dependent on completing TB infection treatment.

- Patients who are abusing alcohol or other substances.

Treatment medications are provided free of charge from KDHE through local health departments and other licensed providers who agree to full compliance with the policy.

county for nine months.

- High-risk patients who have doubtful compliance for a nine-month period.
- Patients who need to start immuno suppressants as soon as TB infection treatment is completed.
- Patients in whom a medical treatment, surgery or some other important intervention is dependent

## School vaccine requirements for 2013-2014

When it comes to immunization requirements, the major changes for the upcoming 2013-2014 school year revolve around expanding the number of grade levels for which certain vaccines are required.

A single dose of Tdap is now required for students in seventh through 12th grades.

Two doses of varicella are required for students in kindergarten through fourth grades and seventh through ninth grades. One dose of varicella is required for all other grades. Students do not need doses of varicella if they have written proof from their physician that they have had chickenpox disease.

For a list of the requirements, visit [ldchealth.org](http://ldchealth.org).

### Save this number: 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**. This number will ring a Health Department staff member's phone.

## Douglas County Disease Report

Disease category	Disease name	Jan. 13	Feb. 13	March 13	Total
Enteric	Campylobacteriosis	3	1	1	5
	Cryptosporidiosis	0	0	0	0
	Salmonellosis	0	1	1	2
	Shiga Toxin	1	0	0	1
	Shigella	1	0	0	1
	Giardia	2	0	0	2
General	Group A - Strep	0	0	1	1
	Hepatitis B- chronic	0	1	0	1
	Hepatitis C	10	5	8	23
	Strep pneumo. invasive	3	1	1	5
Vector	RMSF	0	0	0	0
	Lyme Disease	2	0	0	2
	Ehrlichiosis	0	0	0	0
	West Nile Virus	0	0	0	0
Vaccine-preventable	Pertussis	8	0	1	9
	Varicella	2	0	1	3
STDs (tested at HD only)	Chlamydia	5	7	11	23
	Gonorrhea	1	3	2	6
	Syphilis	0	1	0	1

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

## Health Department clinic coordinator attends national Preparedness Summit

Clinic Coordinator Kathy Colson attended the Public Health Preparedness Summit from March 12-15 in Atlanta. As a member of the NACCHO (National Association of County and



City Health Officials) anti-viral distribution work group, she attended presentations about developing partnerships with local pharmacies to assist in the distribution of medications during the next pandemic. She also learned about nurse triage lines and how they could assist in distributing consistent health information and triaging people to appropriate medical care.

Colson said NACCHO, the Centers for Disease and Prevention, and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials are looking at ways to improve the flow of medications to the public during a health emergency.

## Health Department adjusting to EMR

The transition from paper files to an electronic record system called Insight is an ongoing, evolving process at the Health Department, and we thank you for your patience.

You've probably noticed our records look different and that's because of the Netsmart Technologies' Insight system that we switched to on Jan. 2.

Since then, staff members continue to identify new opportunities to use the system for efficiencies and to capture more data.

# Community Health Plan to be released this spring

In 2012 a group of local organizations, spearheaded by the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department and the Kansas University Work Group on Community Health and Development, began an effort to develop a Community Health Plan to guide collective efforts to improve the health of Douglas County. They started by undertaking a community health assessment to develop a deep understanding of the issues affecting our health and the assets available to improve health outcomes.

The goal was to hear from all segments of the Douglas County community. A variety of methods, including focus groups, key informant interviews, a concerns survey, small area analysis of emergency department data, and a teen PhotoVoice project were all used to identify issues of importance. Thirteen broad areas of concern were consistently identified through the different methodologies, and this list of 13 was further narrowed to five areas that were chosen to form the basis of the community health plan. These areas:

physical activity, access to affordable and healthy food, inadequate recognition of mental health issues and access to mental health services, insufficient access to health care services, and poverty and limited job opportunities. Recognized leaders in the community around these issues were chosen to convene five work groups whose mission was to develop goals and objectives around each issue and to identify opportunities for community action that would have meaningful impact on these issues. The work of the five groups is being consolidated into a Community Health Plan that will be unveiled later this spring and will be used to mobilize community efforts to improve health over the next five years.

Through an arrangement between the Health Department and KU, community progress towards the plan's goals and objectives will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. Progress will be tracked and shared with the community, so that we can all determine if the work we are doing is making a difference and to adjust strategies if needed.

**Visit the community health webpage at [ldchealth.org](http://ldchealth.org) to learn more and to track community progress towards our goals.**

## Laughter is the best medicine



**"My doctor told me to start my exercise program very gradually. Today I drove past a store that sells sweat pants."**