

infectionconnection

A publication of the LDCHD Epidemiology program

Investigation of mumps cases continues

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department continues to investigate cases of mumps transmission among students at the University of Kansas and cases of parotid swelling within the community.

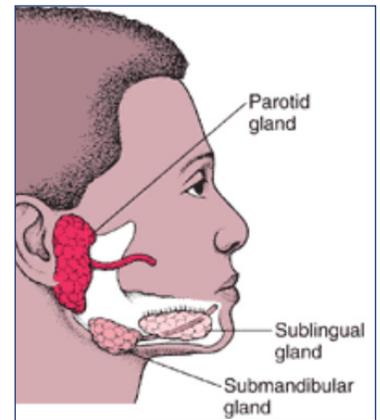
Mumps typically begins with a few days of fever, fatigue, muscle aches or headaches, which is generally followed by swollen parotid glands. Complications such as inflammation of the testicles or ovaries, meningitis or encephalitis can occur.

Persons with symptoms of mumps should stay home from work, school or other social engagements and schedule an appointment

with a primary care provider. Suspected mumps patients who are coming into health care facilities should be offered a mask and given an isolated space to complete all registration paperwork. Recommending isolation up to five days following parotitis to all suspected mumps cases is vital for prevention of transmission.

If you suspect a patient has mumps, report the case to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment epidemiological hotline by calling 1-877-427-7317. Lab testing through

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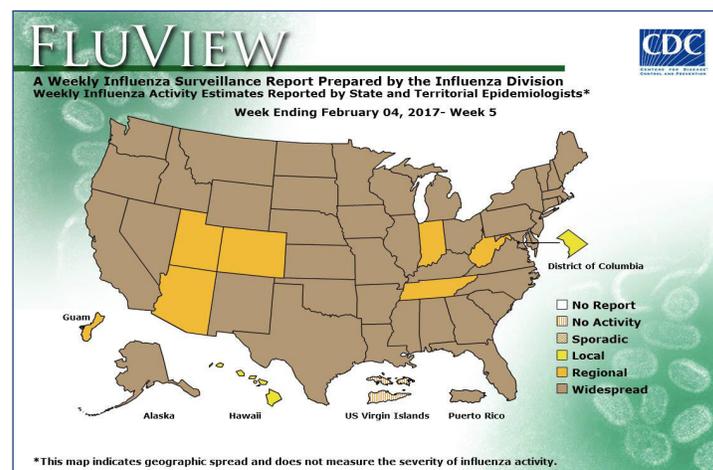
Source: cdc.gov

Flu activity on rise in Douglas County, northeast Kansas

Northeast Kansas, including Douglas County, has been identified as a high-transmission area for influenza. Starting in mid-January, public health officials began to notice elevated levels of lab-confirmed influenza cases and presentation of Influenza-Like Illness (ILI).

If a patient tests positive for flu and are within 48 hours of symptom onset, an antiviral medication like oseltamivir (Tamiflu) might be beneficial for shortening the duration or intensity of illness.

It is not too late to encourage



patients to get influenza vaccinations. Flu season typically extends through

March with cases appearing as late as May. Additionally, people who get the flu after

receiving the vaccine are less likely to have flu-related complications, less likely to be hospitalized due to flu symptoms and more likely to have a shorter illness. The Health Department has flu vaccine available for all ages.

Since influenza is not a reportable disease, most of the data is from syndromic surveillance — surveillance based on symptoms from health data — and ILI reporting sites. If your facility is interested in becoming an ILI site, contact the Health Department.

Douglas County Disease Report

Disease category	Disease name	Nov. 2016	Dec. 2016	Jan. 2017	Total
Enteric	Salmonella	3	0	2	5
	Shigella	3	1	3	7
General	Hepatitis B, acute	1	1	0	2
	Hepatitis B, chronic	1	2	0	3
	Hepatitis C, chronic	9	11	5	25
	Strep Pneumo, Invasive	0	1	0	1
	T. Spongiform Enc.	0	1	0	1
Vaccine preventable	Pertussis	3	6	2	11
	Varicella	1	1	0	2
	Bacterial Meningitis	0	1	0	1
	Mumps	0	9	6	15
Vector	RMSF	1	0	0	1
STDs (tested at HD only)	Chlamydia	7	11	11	29
	Gonorrhea	8	3	6	17
	Syphilis	2	0	0	2

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

Mumps cases under investigation

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the state requires prior approval. Current recommendations are to collect a buccal swab if the onset of parotid swelling is within five days. Serology is only recommended for persons without the MMR vaccination or if testing is completed after five days of parotitis onset.

Over the past few months, parotitis has been associated with other viruses, such as influenza, parainfluenza, adenovirus and rhinovirus. Therefore, the Health Department also recommends a nasopharyngeal swab be collected for testing through the respiratory viral panel in addition

to any rapid testing that might be completed at the facility. This is beneficial to determine if a suspected case is a true case of mumps.

To prevent mumps, the Health Department recommends practicing good public health measures, including thorough hand-washing, covering your cough and not sharing food and drinks.

At this time, a third dose of the MMR vaccine has not been recommended. However, if a patient does not currently have a first or second dose of MMR, strongly encourage him or her to get up to date on vaccinations.

Healthy literacy important for parents, health care providers

Low health literacy can lead to medication errors, confusion about chronic health conditions, higher health costs and poor communication between patients and providers.

The Institute of Medicine defines health literacy as “the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.”

MariaAna Garza, Healthy Families nurse case manager at the Health Department, often sees families struggling

to access and understand health information. “As health care professionals, we have an important responsibility to communicate clearly with patients for improved health outcomes for the community.”

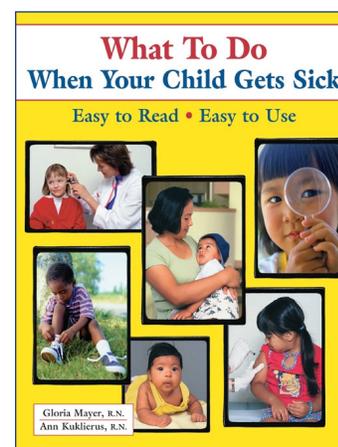
Effective health literacy strategies include:

- Use the “teach-back” method by asking the patient to tell you in his or her own words what information was covered and what the patient is going to do.
- Use plain language (avoid medical terms and jargon).
- Use easy-to-read materials and visual aids.

- Use interpreters and culturally-appropriate services for patients with limited English proficiency.

Since 2011, the Health Department has participated in the parent health literacy project through the Kansas Head Start Association. Parents are given a free copy of the book “What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick,” along with training that teaches them how to use the book. Research shows that when parents use the book, they have fewer ER visits and fewer unnecessary trips to the doctor.

If your agency would like



to participate in the project, contact Karen Brichoux at kbrichoux@ksheadstart.org for information on training opportunities.