

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# **KDHE urges Kansans to take precautions to prevent spread of mumps** ***56 mumps cases have been reported across 12 Kansas counties***

**TOPEKA, Kan.** – As of March 4, 2017, 56 mumps cases have been reported in Kansas across multiple counties. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and affected local health departments are working closely together to identify cases and implement appropriate isolation and exclusions policies to prevent further spread of mumps. Mumps cases have been reported in Atchison, Barton, Crawford, Douglas, Ellis, Finney, Franklin, Johnson, Marshall, Riley, Rooks and Thomas counties.

“As we continue to see mumps cases throughout the state and region, I encourage Kansans to take precautions to prevent the spread of the disease,” said KDHE Secretary Susan Mosier, MD, MBA, FACS. “Please make sure that you and your family are up-to-date on vaccines, and stay home if you do get mumps.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 4,000 mumps cases were reported in the U.S. in 2016, and mumps outbreaks are ongoing in the nearby states of Missouri, Oklahoma and Arkansas.

Mumps is a contagious disease caused by a virus. Mumps typically starts with a few days of fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness and loss of appetite, followed by swollen salivary glands. Mumps can occasionally cause complications, including inflammation of the testicles or ovaries, meningitis or encephalitis. Most people with mumps recover completely in a few weeks.

Anybody with symptoms of mumps should isolate themselves and call their healthcare providers. Anybody who suspects they may have mumps should stay home from work, school and any social activities.

People with mumps can spread the disease before the salivary glands begin to swell and up to five days after the swelling begins. Mumps spreads through saliva or mucus from the mouth, nose or throat. An infected person can spread the virus through the following:

- Coughing, sneezing or talking.
- Sharing items, such as cups or eating utensils, with others.
- Touching objects or surfaces with unwashed hands that are then touched by others.

In addition to staying isolated when you have mumps, you can help prevent the virus from spreading by:

- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and putting your used tissue in the trash can. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoiding sharing drinks or eating utensils.
- Disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, such as toys, doorknobs, tables and counters.

After the introduction of the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine, mumps became less common in the United States. MMR vaccine prevents most, but not all, cases of mumps and complications caused by the disease. Some people who receive two doses of MMR can still get mumps, especially if they have prolonged, close contact with someone who has the disease. If a vaccinated person does get mumps, they will likely have less severe illness than an unvaccinated person. Therefore the best way to reduce your chance of getting the disease is by being vaccinated with the MMR vaccine.

For updated case counts and more information about mumps, please visit:  
<http://www.kdheks.gov/epi/mumps.htm>.

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*KDHE's mission is to protect and improve the health and environment of all Kansans.*