

infectionconnection

A publication of the LDCHD Epidemiology program

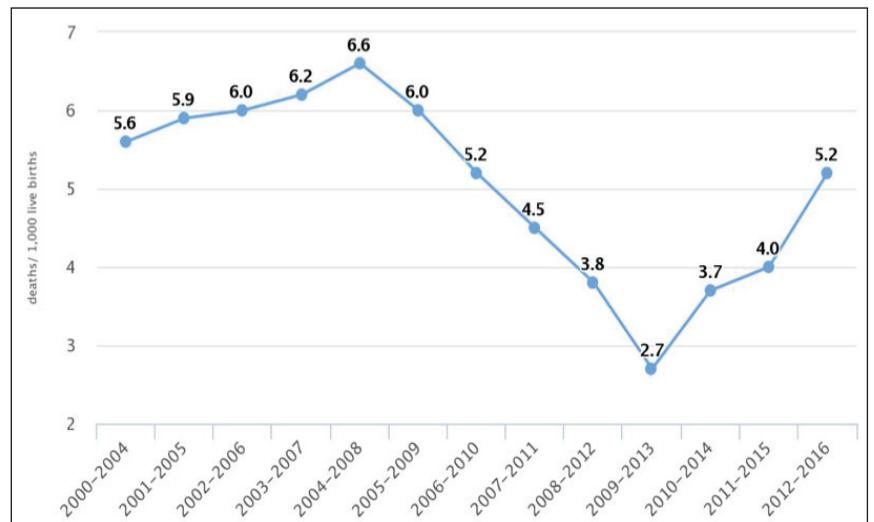
Infant mortality rate rising in Douglas County

Infant mortality, which is the death of an infant before one year of age, is a key aspect of a community's health as it is often an indicator of the political, social and environmental effects on a mother's and child's life.

According to the CDC, there are about 3,500 sleep-related deaths among U.S. babies each year. Many of these deaths are preventable. In order to protect infants, it is imperative that health care providers continually and consistently recommend safe sleep practices for infants. In Douglas County, the rate of infant mortality is 5.2 per 1,000 live births (rolling average for the years of 2012-2016). This rate is below the Healthy People 2020 target of 6.0 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

However, there are a few causes for concern in

See Health care, page 2



Source: Kansas Department of Health and Environment

The Health Department is tracking flu activity in Douglas County. To view the data, visit www.ldchealth.org/flu.

Congenital syphilis cases increasing in Kansas

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is reporting an alarming rise in the number of congenital syphilis cases in Kansas. Six cases have been reported to KDHE thus far in 2018, compared to only one case in the previous five years.

Nationally, the CDC has reported that cases of congenital syphilis have doubled during the past five years and 2017 was the highest number of cases in 20 years.

All pregnant women, regardless

of risk, should be tested for syphilis at the first prenatal visit. Women at high-risk, are previously untested, or had a previous positive screening, should be screened for syphilis during the third trimester and at delivery.

Treatment of the pregnant mother with penicillin is effective — 98 percent success rate — in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission. Successful treatment lowers the risk of stillbirth or death shortly after birth.

Douglas County Disease Report

Disease category	Disease name	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Total
Enteric	Campylobacteriosis	1	0	1	2
	Giardia	1	0	0	1
	Salmonella	5	4	2	11
	Shigella	0	0	1	1
	STEC	2	3	2	7
General	Hepatitis B, chronic	0	0	2	2
	Hepatitis C, chronic	11	5	10	26
	Hemophilus Influenza, Invasive	1	1	0	2
	Legionellosis	1	2	0	3
	Strep Pneumo, Invasive	0	1	0	1
	Lyme	0	1	0	1
	Tularemia	1	0	0	1
	West Nile Virus	0	2	1	3
Vaccine Preventable	Pertussis	0	0	1	1
	Varicella	1	1	1	3
* STDs (tested at HD only)	Chlamydia	24	17	27	68
	Gonorrhea	11	9	7	27
	Syphilis	4	2	1	7

Report includes number of cases investigated by the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. Case classifications include: confirmed, probable and suspect. * Positives tested at Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department.

Health care providers play key role in providing safe sleep information

Continued from page 1

Douglas County. One, the infant mortality rate in Douglas County has been rising in recent years, although not a significant rate. Two, Douglas County is not the lowest infant mortality rate in the state or even the region. Neighboring counties of Johnson and Leavenworth have lower rates at 4.3 and 4.7, respectively. Asphyxiation or suffocation from unsafe sleep environments is the third leading cause of infant death in Kansas.

Accurate recommendations from health care providers are an important aspect of preventing sleep-related deaths for infants. For example, after the recommendation to place babies on their backs for sleep in the early 1990s, infant deaths declined dramatically. However, that decline has slowed. Unfortunately, the CDC reports that 45 percent of caregivers receive no advice or inaccurate from their health care providers.

The current recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics are:

- Place the baby on their back for sleep at all times.
- Use a firm sleep surface.
- Remove soft objects (such as stuffed animals, pillows, crib bumpers) and loose bedding (such as blankets) from the baby's sleep area.
- Share a room with the baby, but not a bed.

Acute Flaccid Myelitis cases have spiked this year nationally

Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) is a rare, but serious condition that affects the nervous system and can cause sudden muscle weakness, facial droop or difficulty swallowing, speaking or breathing. It often follows a respiratory illness and predominantly affects children.

Currently, there are 106 confirmed cases of AFM nationwide. Data suggest that cases spike nationally every other year.

There are currently no confirmed cases of AFM in Kansas. There are two cases with consistent symptoms that have been reported to KDHE. KDHE is working with the CDC

to determine whether they are confirmed cases or not.

It is important to test as quickly as possible after someone develops symptoms. AFM can be diagnosed by examining a person's nervous system, which includes a physical examination of weakened muscles and reflexes, taking a MRI scan of the brain and spinal cord and testing stool, respiratory, sera, and cerebral spinal fluid specimens. Treatment for AFM is currently not available.

Any suspect cases of AFM should be reported to the KDHE epidemiology hotline at 1-877-427-7317.



It's important for health care providers to talk to their patients who use tobacco products about becoming and staying tobacco-free.

Remind them that most insurance plans, including Medicaid, cover counseling and cessation medications. KanCare now covers up to four quit attempts per year. Each "quit attempt" includes a free round of nicotine replacement therapy and unlimited counseling sessions.