

The Infection

LAWRENCE-DOUGLAS COUNTY
Health Department

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Connection

Ensuring health care worker shots current critical for patient safety

It's a typical day at your practice. The waiting room is full of patients seeking treatment for a variety of routine illnesses. What if one of those patients is unvaccinated and carrying a vaccine-preventable disease?

What if other patients and staff aren't up to date on their immunizations? As health care workers, we know the importance of being properly immunized. But do you know if your staff is up to date?

The recent case of measles investigated by the Health Department emphasizes the importance of health care workers whose vaccinations are current.

Medical offices should also keep up-to-date records of the vaccinations staff have received to protect patients and each other from illness. This can be particularly helpful when the Health Department conducts a communicable disease investigation.

Of particular importance is the Tdap vaccination, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis. Adults can unknowingly transmit pertussis to infants, who cannot receive the first



Public health nurse Kathy Colson performs a well child screening at the Health Department. She is administering a dose of the infant version of the vaccine, Dtap, until they are 2 months old.

Although every health care employee strives to better the health of his or her patients, not being properly vaccinated can have serious effects on the overall health care environment and can cause compromises in safety for patients and their communities. The following table lists vaccine recommendations to be followed in any health care facility:

Recommended vaccines for health care personnel

Vaccine	Recommendations in brief
Hepatitis B	Give three-dose series (dose no. 1 now, no. 2 in one month, no. 3 approximately five months after no. 2). Give IM. Obtain anti-HBs serologic testing one to two months after dose three.
Influenza	Give one dose of influenza vaccine annually. Give inactivated injectable influenza vaccine intramuscularly or live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) intranasally.
MMR	For health care personnel (HCP) born in 1957 or later without serologic evidence of immunity or prior vaccination, give two doses of MMR, four weeks apart. Give SC.
Varicella	For HCP who have no serologic proof of immunity, prior vaccination or history of varicella disease, give two doses of varicella vaccine, four weeks apart. Give SC.
Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis	Give a one-time dose of Tdap as soon as feasible to all HCP who have not received Tdap previously. Give Td boosters every 10 years thereafter. Give IM.
Meningococcal	Give one dose to microbiologists who are routinely exposed to isolates of <i>N. meningitidis</i> . Give IM or SC.

For more information on what vaccines your staff may need, please contact the Health Department at (785) 843-3060.

Warm weather and vectorborne illnesses go hand in hand

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department has had several more cases of tick-borne diseases reported in May this year compared to May 2010. In the month of May, the Health Department investigated one confirmed case of ehrlichiosis, one confirmed case of Lyme disease and a suspect case of Rocky Mountain



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Consider possible algae illnesses this summer

By Robert P. Moser, MD,
Secretary, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

As the weather warms, Kansans will spend time engaging in outdoor recreation at our numerous public lakes. Unfortunately, fun in the sun can expose individuals to health threats that may be taken for granted.



Robert P. Moser, MD

Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) are prominent in Kansas waters, and under certain conditions harmful algal blooms will produce toxins that pose

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Cyanobacteria appears at Veterans Lake, Barton County, Kansas. KDHE

Douglas County Disease Report

Disease category	Disease name	April 11	May 11	June 11	Total
Enteric	Campylobacter	3	0	1	4
	E. coli	1	0	0	1
	Giardiasis	1	3	0	4
	Salmonella	2	1	2	5
General	Hepatitis B	0	1	0	1
	Hepatitis C	2	6	8	16
	Strep pneumo. invasive	2	2	1	5
Vector	Ehrlichiosis	0	1	1	2
	Lyme disease	2	1	2	5
	RMSF	0	2	2	4
Vaccine-preventable diseases	Measles	0	1	0	1
	Mumps	0	0	1	1
	Pertussis	1	3	0	5
	Varicella	0	0	2	2
STDs (tested at HD only)	Chlamydia	16	14	16	46
	Gonorrhea	2	2	2	6

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

Same physician, new name

Following her wedding on New Year's Eve, Dr. Lori Hougham, Health Officer/Medical Consultant for the Health Department is now **Dr. Lori Nichols**. She has served at the Health Department since January 2008 and practices full time at Lawrence Family Medicine and Obstetrics.

Health Department fees for clinic services

Many of the Health Department clinic services have fees. While we receive funds from grants as well as local city/county government, in 2010, just 23 percent of clinic expenses were covered by fee revenue.

When you refer to us, please don't tell your patients that we

are a free clinic. For family planning, we offer a sliding fee scale and will work with the client to arrange a payment schedule for other services. With the exception of rabies pre-exposure and international travel vaccinations, we will not turn clients away for inability to pay.

Vectorborne illnesses increase during summer months

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spotted fever. In May 2010, only one tickborne illness was reported – a suspect case of Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

Most vector-borne diseases in Kansas are transmitted through an infected tick or mosquito. Although great advances have been made in vaccines and chemoprophylactic drugs against vector-borne diseases (such as yellow fever and malaria), individuals should still use repellents and other measures against mosquitoes and ticks.

For more information on these or other vector-borne diseases, please contact the Health Department and ask for a Communicable Disease nurse at (785)843-0721.

Agency investigates animal bites

Just like foodborne illness, blue-green algae and vectorborne disease, animal bite reports also increase in the summer months.

In June, the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department investigated two reports of animals biting humans. Across Kansas in 2010, there were 56 confirmed rabies cases in animals – 37 skunks, five cows, five cats and three dogs. Bats are also

widely known to be carriers of the illness.

The virus is in the saliva of infected animals and is transmitted to humans not just through bites, but in other ways such as a lick from the animal or touching a surface the animal has licked.

The virus can then be transferred from the infected surface through a person's mucous membranes or an open wound.

Laughter is the best medicine



Health secretary warns against cyanobacteria in lakes, ponds

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a health risk to people, with possible rapid symptom onset.

During the months ahead, we are asking for your help and heightened awareness. Potential routes of exposure include: ingestion, dermal contact or inhalation of airborne droplets containing toxins while swimming, boating and skiing.

A large percentage of the public will report "allergic" type reactions after exposure, such as intestinal problems, respiratory problems, or skin irritations. If

you have a patient presenting with these clinical symptoms, can confirm an exposure history to a body of water within a reasonable time period prior to symptoms, and have ruled out any other diagnoses, please consider this a suspect case and complete the "Algae Illness Reporting Form for Public and Medical Professionals" located at <http://www.kdheks.gov/algae-illness/index.htm> or call the Kansas Department of Health and Environment at 1-877-427-7317 to report any suspect case.