

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 17, 2011

Contact: Lisa V. Horn
Communications Coordinator
Office: (785) 856-7362

Health Department investigates measles case in elementary school

(Lawrence, KS) – The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department is investigating a case of measles in an unvaccinated child at Quail Run Elementary School. All those at risk for the disease are being contacted and the investigation is ongoing. The child is being isolated until no longer contagious.

Measles is a respiratory disease caused by a virus. It causes fever, runny nose and eyes, tiredness, cough and a blotchy rash all over the body. With the creation and use of the MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) vaccine, measles cases are rare in the United States; however, more than 10 million people become ill from the virus each year. Worldwide, measles kills almost 200,000 people each year. Potential complications include pneumonia, ear infections, diarrhea and encephalitis (brain inflammation).

Measles is spread through the air by breathing, coughing or sneezing. It is highly contagious and unvaccinated individuals are at risk of developing the disease. Measles can be spread to others from four days before to four days after the rash appears.

The best way to keep from getting the disease is to be vaccinated. Children need to receive the MMR vaccine when they are 12 to 15 months old and again before they enter kindergarten.

For more information on measles, go to the Health Department's website at www.ldchealth.org.