

PRESS RELEASE

November 27, 2019

Flu Related Pediatric Death

Wichita Falls, Texas—The Wichita Falls-Wichita County Public Health District is saddened to report an influenza-associated pediatric death in Wichita County. This is the second confirmed pediatric influenza death in Texas this 2019-2020 flu season. While adult flu deaths are not required to be reported to the local health department, influenza-associated deaths of children ages 0-18 are of serious concern and are a mandatory reportable condition.

Current reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) indicate the start of this flu season has higher than normal levels of influenza cases for this time of year. With the holiday season underway and people gathering with family and friends, the Health District urges everyone to get vaccinated against the flu. The flu vaccine is the first line of defense to protect yourself, and people around you who are vulnerable to the serious effects of the flu. Those who are very susceptible to the flu and its complications include: children under five years old, the elderly, and people with underlying health conditions (e.g., diabetes, asthma, etc.). It is important to note that infants under 6 months of age cannot receive the influenza vaccine. The best way to protect them is to have everyone who will have contact with the infant receive a flu vaccine, and to also limit an infant's exposure to large groups of individuals.

Along with vaccination, other safety measures that can be taken to prevent catching the flu and to also protect those around you include:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water, or using a hand sanitizer if water is not available;
- Covering your sneezes and coughs;
- Keeping hands away from your face;
- Avoiding people who are ill with the flu; and
- Preventing the spread of the flu to others by staying home if sick.

If you or your family needs flu vaccinations please see your regular healthcare provider, or come to the Health District. The Health District's Immunization Clinic hours are:

- Monday–Thursday 8:00 am-11:30 am; 1:00 pm-4:30 pm
- Friday 8:00 am -1:00pm
- Late clinic is on December 16 from 5:00 pm-6:30 pm

The Health District's Immunization Clinic can be reached at (940) 761-6841.

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