



Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department

PREVENT • PROMOTE • PROTECT

News Release

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Melissa Propp, RN at 308-345-4223 or email: nurse@swhealth.ne.gov

First Confirmed Case of Influenza

The first laboratory-verified case of Influenza A has been confirmed in the Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department's (SWNPHD) nine county health district. Influenza is highly contagious and is caused by the influenza virus.

The virus is spread from person to person primarily through droplets, which are released when an infected person coughs or sneezes. SWNPHD highly recommends regular handwashing, covering your cough and getting a flu shot as prevention methods.

“The case of influenza A was confirmed at the end of August. This is extremely early to see the flu,” states Melissa Propp, RN, Surveillance Nurse. “February is usually the peak of influenza season.”

Symptoms of influenza (flu) may include a sudden onset of fever, chills, headache, dry cough or muscle aches. Illness may last several days to a week or more before recovery. The flu may be especially serious for the elderly and people with diabetes, heart, lung or kidney diseases.

“Influenza is in your lungs. GI virus attacks your stomach and/or digestive tract. Do not confuse influenza with GI virus, better known as “stomach flu”,” states Propp. “The flu shot can protect you from getting influenza but it does not protect you from stomach flu.”

For more information, contact SWNPHD at 308-345-4223. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th (one block north of Arby's) in McCook or 501 Broadway in Imperial (5th Street entrance). Information can also be found on the website at www.swhealth.ne.gov or on Facebook and Twitter.

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