

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Chickenpox Exposure in Southwest Nebraska

McCook –Chickenpox has been reported to Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD). “Chickenpox (varicella-zoster) is a virus best known for making its victims itch like crazy from the rash of blisters it causes,” shares Tami Herskowitz, SWNPHD Surveillance Nurse. “Once it gets going, chickenpox is extremely contagious and can catch up with anyone who’s not received the vaccine.”

Before the vaccine was available, about 100 people in the U.S. died each year from chicken pox according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. You can make yourself nearly invincible against chickenpox if you get the vaccine.

Chickenpox is an “air and surface” attacker. The cough or sneeze of an infected person sends droplets into the air and onto surfaces. Others then take in the virus through their mouth or nose. Scratching the itchy lesions may also send the virus into the air and infect people.

“We encourage everyone to make sure their children receive the chickenpox vaccine,” explains Herskowitz. “Once someone has chickenpox, years later they can have a very painful disease later called shingles. Either shot is available at Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department, please call Melissa Propp, RN at 308-345-4223 to make an appointment.

For more information, contact Tami at tami@swhealth.ne.gov or call 308-345-4223. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th (one block north of Arby’s) in McCook. More information can also be found on Facebook or Twitter and our website at www.swhealth.ne.gov.

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