

## News Release

### **For Immediate Release**

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## **Hemophilus Influenza Disease - What's That?**

Hemophilus Influenza B, also known as HIB, can be a very serious disease for children younger than 5 or people 65 years and older. Although influenza is in the name, this virus is not related to the respiratory influenza virus or flu. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) encourages residents to learn about vaccine-preventable diseases like HIB that used to affect many children in our communities.

Symptoms of HIB vary based on the type of infection but the most common are fever, chills, excessive tiredness, headaches, and muscle aches.

HIB is spread by direct contact with someone who has the disease, usually through coughing or sneezing. Some people who have this virus in their nose or throats can still spread the disease even if they are not feeling sick.

Some HIB infections are mild, like ear infections, while other times the infection may be more severe and lead to serious illness such as pneumonia (lung infection), blood infections, or meningitis (swelling of the brain and spinal cord).

Contact your medical provider right away if you or your child has chest pain, shortness of breath, poor feeding, abnormal reflexes, slowness, inactivity, or confusion.

“HIB is a potentially serious infection that can be prevented with vaccines,” states Melissa Propp RN, Clinic Manager at SWNPHD. “HIB shots are given to babies during their Well Child checkups with their doctor. Staying up to date on the recommended vaccines is important for helping to protect your child’s health.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) children need vaccines for HIB at 2, 4 and 6 months with a booster dose at 12 to 15 months of age.

For more information on HIB or other vaccines, call SWNPHD at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. You can follow us on Facebook, TikTok, You Tube and Instagram or view the website at [swhealth.ne.gov](http://swhealth.ne.gov) which contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health.

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