

January 21, 2020

For Immediate Release

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### Stay Home If You Have A Fever

Flu and stomach bugs (gastrointestinal illnesses) are circulating throughout the nine-county health district as well as in the rest of the state. With these illnesses, a fever often comes along with all the other symptoms. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that if you are sick with a fever you need to stay home from work, school or daycare.

“A fever is the body’s way of letting us know that it is trying to fight a virus or bacterial infection,” states Melissa Propp, Public Health Nurse at SWNPHD. “People who have a fever can spread germs to others.” According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) if you have had a fever you need to stay home until at least 24 hours after the fever is gone (a fever is a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher). Your temperature should be measured at a time when you are not using fever-reducing medicine (medicines that contain ibuprofen or acetaminophen).

The only way to know if someone has a fever is to use a thermometer. Using the back of the wrist, kissing the forehead, or feeling if they are hot or chilled is not a good measure of someone’s actual temperature.

If you are caring for someone who is ill with a fever, wash your hands often, especially in these cases:

- Immediately after touching them
- Assisting with vomit or poop
- Throwing away tissues
- Handling dirty towels and bed linens

Limit your contact with someone who is ill as much as possible while still delivering the care they need. If a small child is being held, turn their head away from you so if they cough or sneeze it is away from your face.

For more information contact Public Health Nurse Melissa Propp at 308-345-4223. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10<sup>th</sup> (one block north of Arby’s) in McCook or 501 Broadway in Imperial (5<sup>th</sup> Street entrance). Information can also be found on SWNPHD’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

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