

News Release – 2 pages

From the Knox County Health Department

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Another confirmed case of H1N1 in Knox County

The Knox County Health Department has been notified of another confirmed case of the H1N1 virus in Knox County. This time, the affected individual was a high school student, who has since recovered from the illness and returned to school. The notification came from a local doctor's office.

“Since the Ohio Department of Health has tightened its requirements for testing, many doctors are sending suspected cases to commercial labs for testing,” said Health Commissioner Dennis Murray. “Such was the situation with this case which appears to be isolated. It looks as though no other students or close contacts were affected.”

When someone has flu-like symptoms and they visit their doctor, they are tested for influenza, explained Murray. If the sample comes back positive for Influenza A, it is then sent for further testing to determine if it is H1N1. In the meantime, the individual is given anti-viral medication and told to stay home and limit contact with others. Usually, by the time the lab results return, the individual has recovered from the illness and can return to school or work.

“Based on what is happening in other parts of the country, we expect to see more cases of the H1N1 in Knox County,” said Murray. “Until a vaccine is made available, we encourage everyone to practice good health behaviors including: covering their cough, washing their hands and staying home when sick.

The H1N1 flu has similar symptoms to seasonal flu including fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with this virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting. H1N1 is also characterized by a high fever (100 degrees or higher) and a severe headache.

“Because this strain of H1N1 is much milder than expected, most healthy people who become infected with the virus will recover,” said Murray. “However, it is much more serious for youth, pregnant women and those with chronic health

conditions. Therefore if you are in one of those categories and you have flu-like symptoms, we suggest you see your doctor.”

A vaccine for H1N1 is not expected to be available until late October. While there is expected to be no shortage of the vaccine, the total amount needed for each community will not arrive at one time, but instead will arrive in several shipments between late October and the end of the year. When the first vaccine shipments arrive, they will be used for the most affected groups of people: pregnant women, children, ages 6 mos. through 24 years of age; and individuals with chronic health conditions. The vaccine will also be made available to healthcare workers as it will be important to keep those who are taking care of others, to remain healthy themselves.

For more information, visit the health department’s website at www.knoxhealth.com, click on the What’s New button on the left side and then click on H1N1 Information.