

Seasonal Flu a Greater Concern than Ebola

(KTNC)--Two patients with Ebola have been treated at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, and officials with the Southeast District Health Department say they are preparing for how to handle the illness.

Health Department Assistant Director Lisa Bloss says they have been in contact with health departments around the state about ebola...and local hospitals are trained in how to quarantine patients and in other protective measures.

While Ebola is grabbing the headlines, Bloss says that is not their primary health concern. She says the chances are very slim that anyone will contract Ebola, as the only people who have contracted it in the United States are healthcare workers who came into direct contact with patients who were being treated for the disease. Those patients contracted the disease in other countries. Bloss says the seasonal flu is a greater health risk than Ebola...and the best way to prevent the spread of flu is to get a flu shot.

The Southeast District Health Department offers immunization clinics for children. Adults wanting a seasonal flu shot can call the department's toll-free number, 877-777-0424, for information on who has vaccines and the cost.

The Southeast District Health Department recommends taking a few simple precautions to stay healthy this winter. That includes staying up to date on immunizations, eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water, getting eight hours of sleep per night, exercising daily, washing your hands regularly, buckling your seat belt, and not texting or using other electronic devices while driving.

Bloss says hand-washing kills over 99% of germs, when done correctly. That means using warm water and soap, and washing your hands for at least 20 seconds - about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday."

Bloss says flu hasn't become widespread in southeast Nebraska, but there have been a couple cases of Influenza B reported in Missouri.

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