

Local, state officials working to address Hiawatha illness
(KNZA)--Local and state officials are working together to address the illness hitting the Hiawatha community.

That's according to a joint news release issued Thursday evening by the Hiawatha Community Hospital and Hiawatha USD 415.

While it is currently unknown what is causing the illness, the release says the hospital and school district are working closely with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Brown County Health Department to investigate the cluster of illnesses.

The release says the hospital continues to see an elevated number of patients with pneumonia-like symptoms at this time.

If you have a fever, your advised to stay home until you have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. If you have a fever of 100.4 or greater for 3 days with a cough, your should see your medical provider.

An underlying respiratory condition, such as asthma, may make illness worse so you should consider seeing your medical provider soon after illness starts. The release says KDHE does not recommend to exclude a person with a cough from school or school event.

The release adds a cough could have many causes including asthma, allergies, or other respiratory illnesses and does not warrant isolation. If you only have a cough, it does not mean you are sick with this illness; however, if you are having severe coughing fits, it is recommended you stay home.

As a reminder, the release says you should always practice healthy habits to prevent the spread of germs, especially when you are ill.

Here's a list of recommendations:

*** Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. After using the tissue, throw it in the trash and wash your hands.**

***If a tissue is not available, please cough or sneeze into your sleeve at the elbow. Do not cough into your hands.**

***Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.**

***Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs spread this way.**

Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.

Please note the HCH Family Practice Clinic holds walk-in clinic Monday through Friday from 7:30 am – 9:00 am. If you are unable to make it to the walk-in clinic, please call 785-742-2161 for a same day appointment.

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