

By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

There have been “several” confirmed cases of Influenza A at Chase County Clinic in Imperial. That’s according to Dr. Jonathan Richman, who said “It looks like the flu shot is effective. Those confirmed cases had not had the shot.”

Chase County Schools (CCS) Nurse Angie Paisley said she is aware of one or two diagnosed cases among students. “We’re doing all right,” she declared, adding that CCS has recorded some gastro-intestinal and upper respiratory cases.

The American Red Cross is urging people to get vaccinated now.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report for the week of Dec. 29 to Jan. 4 shows 35 states were seeing widespread flu activity, up from 25 a week earlier. That includes Nebraska, Colorado and Kansas.

The Chase County Clinic has a good supply of the flu vaccine, although it is out of the nasal spray for infants. Persons may stop in at the clinic during office hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., to receive the vaccine.

The shot is \$25, and persons are urged to check with their insurance companies to see if the cost is covered.

Common symptoms of influenza are high fever, severe body aches, headache, being extremely tired, sore throat, cough, runny or stuffy nose, and vomiting and/or diarrhea (more common in children).

A health care provider should be contacted immediately if any of the following symptoms develop:

Fast breathing, trouble breathing or bluish skin color; pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen (adults); confusion or sudden dizziness; not drinking enough fluids, not being able to eat, or severe or persistent vomiting; flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and worse cough, and in children, no tears when crying or significantly fewer wet diapers than normal.

Prevention

Besides obtaining a flu vaccine, the following are steps to prevent flu:

Stay home if sick; avoid close contact with people who are sick; cover the nose and mouth with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing; wash hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand-rub; and avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth.

More information about influenza and how to help stop the spread of the flu virus is available at www.redcross.org.