January 24, 2017

CATEGORY: News Release
RELEASE DATE: For Immediate Release
CONTACT PERSON: Sandy Perkins, Community Health Director
(509) 684-5048

As of January 23, 2017, a single isolated, probable case of mumps has been identified in Ferry County. No mumps cases have been reported in Stevens or Pend Oreille Counties. An outbreak is continuing to occur in Washington State with a growing number of cases in Spokane County. As of January 18, 2017, there were 235 cases in the state with 76 reported from Spokane County as of January 23, 2017. The Northeast Tri County Health District (NETCHD) is taking action in the control of this isolated case, while continuing to prepare for the possibility of and increase of mumps cases being diagnosed in the tri-county area.

Regarding the case identified in Ferry County, Dr. Sam Artzis, NETCHD’s Health Officer, who is also acting as Spokane County’s Interim Health Officer, said, “this appears to be an isolated case although connected to Spokane’s outbreak. All precautions are being taken to ensure that this does not spread. Particularly with this case now in Ferry County, I strongly urge individuals to ensure that they and their families are up to date on their measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, this is the best prevention to getting mumps.”

Although a MMR vaccine prevents about 88 percent of mumps cases after two (2) doses, it’s possible for someone who has been vaccinated against the disease to get sick. Vaccination remains the best way to prevent mumps, health officials said.

High vaccination rates also ensure people who can’t get the vaccine because of medical conditions are better protected.
Mumps is contracted through close, prolonged contact with someone who is symptomatic. Mumps is spread through saliva and mucus, and can pass from person to person through coughing, sneezing, talking or touching an unwashed surface that an infected person has touched.

Mumps can cause cold or flu-like symptoms, including facial swelling or pain and tenderness along the jawline and neck along with discomfort while swallowing. Men can feel testicular pain while women can feel pain in the pelvis. Swelling of the testicles (orchitis) has been linked as a risk factor for testicular cancer. Symptoms can appear anywhere from 12 to 25 days after exposure. Potential complications of mumps include hearing loss, meningitis (swelling of the covering of the brain and spinal cord), and brain damage. Complications often require medical treatment. In rare cases, mumps is deadly. Adults are more likely than children to become very sick with mumps.

Before the mumps vaccine was in use, the disease caused about 186,000 cases in the U.S. each year, some of which led to permanent deafness in children, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Mumps cases have fallen 99 percent since the vaccine was introduced, though the U.S. has seen periodic outbreaks.

Outbreaks are much larger in areas with lower vaccine coverage rates, the CDC says.

People born after 1957 should review their immunization status and look to see if they have received at least one (1) MMR vaccine. Individual vaccines for these diseases are no longer available in the United States. It is possible to have a blood test to check for immunity. Please contact your health care provider to learn more about getting an MMR vaccine if you need one or to order a blood test to check for immunity.

Northeast Tri County Health Offices:
- Colville (509) 684-5048
- Newport (509) 447-3131
- Republic (509) 775-3111

# # #