Diphtheria

What is Diphtheria?

Diphtheria is a serious disease caused by a toxin made by the Corynebacterium diphtheriae bacterium. Vaccination campaigns halted the spread of disease, but a resurgence has occurred in recent years.

Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms usually appear 2-5 days after being infected

- Weakness
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Swollen glands in the neck

The toxin forms a gray mucus that can building up in the throat and nose, leading to respiratory distress.

If you have symptoms, call your healthcare provider

Transmission (How it spreads)

- Person-to-person via respiratory droplet
- People may also get sick from coming into direct contact with open sores or clothes that have touched open sores of an infected person
- People may also get infected by coming into contact with an object that has bacteria on it.

Diagnosis and Treatment

Throat swab and/or skin samples of lesions

Diphtheria antitoxin

Broad spectrum antibiotics

Prevention:

- Vaccination! For babies and children younger than 7 with DTap or DT vaccine
- Preteens and adults should be vaccinated with either Tdap or Td.

Who is at Risk?

Those who have not been vaccinated

If you have symptoms, call your healthcare provider

Report cases to the Riley County Health Department by calling the Disease Investigation Line: 785-317-0474

Diphtheria is a reportable disease in the state of Kansas. All cases must be reported to RCHD or KDHE via the Epi Hotline: 877-427-7317

For more information, visit:
www.cdc.gov/diphtheria