



## JOHNSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

dedicated to the prevention of disease and promotion of wellness for our community.

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### **CONFIRMED MENINGITIS DEATH IN JOHNSON COUNTY**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

(OLATHE, KS – **March 24, 2009**) – The Johnson County Health Department has confirmed that a 58 year old woman has died from bacterial meningitis (*Neisseria meningitidis*) after traveling to Mexico, accompanying youths on spring break. The disease investigation is ongoing. Those at risk of infection transmission have been identified and treated.

Meningitis is an infection of the fluid around the spinal cord and the fluid that surrounds the brain. Symptoms can range from fever, headache, and stiff neck to more severe symptoms such as confusion or seizures.

Meningitis is spread through the exchange of respiratory and throat secretions (i.e., coughing, kissing). None of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as things like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been.

Attached is additional information about meningitis.

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#### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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