

# Flu season takes on heightened awareness with death of Ayzlee McCarthy, age three

**ELK HORN** - According to media reports from KCCI-TV, Des Moines, and the Des Moines Register, Ayzlee McCarthy, 3, died Mon., Dec. 29 within 72 hours of being diagnosed with influenza A and B, and sepsis.

According to media outlets her parents, Jim and Amber McCarthy, Elk Horn, took Ayzlee to a clinic on Sat., Dec. 27 and she was diagnosed with Influenza A and B.

On Sunday her symptoms continued to worsen and she was taken to Cass County Memorial Hospital, Atlantic, and later transported to Blank

Children's Hospital, Des Moines. The family said in the media that within six hours of arriving in Des Moines, Ayzlee died.

While state officials have not reported any deaths from the flu this season, Polk County Medical Examiner Dr. Gregory Schmunk said since Nov. 1 his office has processed seven death certificates that had influenza listed as either the cause of death or as a significant condition that contributed to the death, KCCI reported.

## Hospital board hears flu report

At Myrtue Medical Center's monthly board meeting on Tues., Dec. 23, the board heard a report from Director of Public Health, Calla Poldberg, MSN, ARNP, FNP-BC, cautioning board members the 2015 flu season could be significant and that they were already seeing very high numbers in November.

Poldberg said Shelby County is seeing four strains of influenza -- A(H3) which was seen in more than 94 percent of the cases; A(H1N1); and two B strains and that influenza peaks here locally in January. She said they al-

ready had 40 reported influenza cases, eight of which were hospitalized "which is a big number for us."

Poldberg said even though the number of cases is high, the actual count could be much higher

because not everyone seeks out a medical practitioner for treatment and is not reported.



Ayzlee McCarthy  
Elk Horn