



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Health department facilitate investigation into recent deaths in children

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health is aware of three deaths since July occurring in Lee County females between 7 and 10 years of age related to probable viral infections affecting the heart.

Physicians see many children with viral infections that do not progress to this stage of infection nor pose any additional health risks. There is no evidence that the recent case was caused by a bacterial infection. Therefore, there are no recommendations for treatment with antibiotics or other medications. As a standard precaution, parents, teachers and others should continue to encourage strict handwashing and other hygienic practices.

The Alabama Department of Public Health is collaborating with local medical professionals and professionals at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to arrange for additional tests on the recent cases.

“These tragic occurrences are unusual, but at this time do not require any special precautions by the public,” said Charles Woernle, M.D., Assistant State Health Officer for Disease Control and Prevention. “Hopefully, additional tests by CDC will identify the specific type of virus that caused these illnesses. There are several common viral illnesses that usually resolve without serious consequences but which, unfortunately, on rare occasions can result in death.”