

For Immediate Release
September 1, 2021

KDHE Urges Kansans Not to Take Ivermectin for COVID-19

TOPEKA – With a rise in calls to poison control centers and visits to emergency rooms, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is urging Kansans not to take the drug ivermectin unless prescribed by a physician then take it exactly as prescribed. This drug is not approved or authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat or prevent COVID-19. Ivermectin has been approved in humans to treat specific skin conditions like rosacea, head lice or some parasitic worms. Ivermectin is used in livestock as an anti-parasite medicine and can be found in livestock supply centers. Livestock drugs are highly concentrated for large animals and can be highly toxic in humans.

“Kansans should avoid taking medications that are intended for animals and should only take ivermectin as prescribed by their physician,” said Lee Norman, M.D., Secretary of KDHE. “These highly concentrated doses can cause severe illness and even death in humans. The COVID-19 vaccine remains the most effective way to prevent COVID-19.”

An ivermectin overdose includes gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Overdoses are associated with hypotension and neurologic effects such as decreased consciousness, confusion, hallucinations, seizures, coma, and death. Ivermectin may intensify the effects of other drugs that cause central nervous system depression, such as benzodiazepines and barbiturates.

The COVID-19 vaccine is the safest and most effective way to prevent getting sick and protect against severe disease and death from SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, including the Delta variant. In addition to the vaccine, wearing a mask, washing your hands, and social distancing will help stop the spread of the virus. Find a COVID-19 vaccine near you by visiting <https://www.vaccines.gov/>.

###