

NEWS RELEASE
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Galveston County Health District Recommends Testing for Coastal Health and Wellness Patients

GALVESTON COUNTY, Texas – The Galveston County Health District (GCHD) is working in conjunction with the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to investigate the risk of disease transmission related to infection control practices at the Coastal Health & Wellness (CHW) clinics located in Texas City and Galveston.

The investigation was triggered by a recent accreditation site review conducted on February 12-13, 2018. “Although we have no conclusive evidence at this time that disease transmission has taken place from procedures that were performed at Coastal Health & Wellness, we want to err on the side of caution and offer testing to any patients who could have been impacted,” said Dr. Philip Keiser, Galveston County Local Health Authority. “Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV are serious medical conditions,” said Keiser. “People who are infected may not exhibit any symptoms of the disease for many years, so that is why it is important to get tested and treated”.

The findings identified breaches in infection control related to some dental and medical procedures that may have put patients at risk for the Hepatitis B virus, Hepatitis C virus and HIV.

On February 14, 2018, upon notification of the findings, dental and medical procedures at Coastal Health & Wellness that required sterilization of instruments were suspended and an investigation was immediately initiated by the Health District.

Individuals who received certain dental or medical procedures at CHW from March 1, 2015 to February 13, 2018 are strongly advised to get tested for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV, which will be provided free of charge at the Health District office. A complete list of the procedures can be found online at www.gchd.org/chwhealthcheck.

Health officials will also be notifying patients directly who meet the criteria for testing; however, anyone who has a question related to their status can contact the GCHD Investigation Hotline at (409) 938-2397 and an operator will be available to assist them. Patients who have not undergone invasive medical or dental procedures requiring sterilization of equipment, such as blood draws, are not at risk and do not require testing.

Testing services will begin on Monday, March 26, 2018 at the Galveston County Health District Public Health Office, located at 9850 Emmett F Lowry Expressway, Entrance B, Texas City, TX. and continue through Friday, April 13, 2018. Appointments can be made by going online at www.gchd.org or by calling the GCHD Investigation Hotline number at (409) 938-2397. Individuals who reside outside Galveston County should contact their physician or local health department to arrange testing.

Operators will be available via the GCHD Investigation Hotline starting Monday, March 26th at (409) 938-2397 between the hours of 7:30 AM and 7:00 PM Monday through Thursday and 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Fridays and Saturdays to assist any Coastal Health & Wellness patients who may have additional questions.

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