

Kansas says new virus found after resident's death

December 23 2014, by John Hanna

A new virus thought to be carried by ticks or other insects has been discovered following the death of a southeast Kansas resident during the summer, public health officials said Monday.

The [new virus](#) is called Bourbon virus, after Bourbon County, home of the patient who died. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment said the patient's symptoms, including fever and fatigue, were similar to symptoms from other tick-borne diseases.

The Kansas health department said testing by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed that the patient had a virus not previously identified. Health department spokeswoman Aimee Rosenow said it's still not clear how much the Bourbon virus contributed to the patient's death.

"This was the first known instance and the only confirmed case," Rosenow said. "This is a new virus, and we are still learning."

The health department declined to identify the victim of the virus or provide details about the case, saying it was protecting the privacy of the patient and family members.

The department said there's no specific vaccine or treatment for the disease from the Bourbon virus but described the risk as "minimal" during the winter, given health officials' belief that it is transmitted through tick or insect bites.

The health agency also suggested the same precautions outdoors for avoiding other tick- and insect-borne illnesses. Those include using [insect repellent](#), wearing long sleeves and pants, and avoiding wooded and busy areas with high grass or leaf litter.

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