

Clear Creek girl does not have meningitis

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LEAGUE CITY — Clear Creek public school district mistakenly told parents this week that an eighth grade student had viral meningitis based on an incorrect diagnosis from the girl's doctor.

Doctors later discovered that the Victory Lakes Intermediate School student did not have viral meningitis, Galveston County Health District spokesman Kurt Koopmann said.

The district told parents in a letter Wednesday that the student was diagnosed with viral meningitis, but there was no cause for alarm. Viral meningitis is not as dangerous as bacterial meningitis, which resulted in the death of a La Marque Middle School student last month.

Like the bacterial form of the infection, viral meningitis can only be spread by kissing, sharing drinks, utensils, food or toothbrushes. Koopmann said doctors treat the symptoms of the viral form of the infection and do not use antibiotics as would be the case with bacterial meningitis.

Koopmann said the health district received 26 cases of viral meningitis last year and 28 the year before.

The school district sent out the letter after receiving a diagnosis from the girl's doctor, Clear Creek spokeswoman Elaina Polsen said. A second letter will be sent home Monday correcting the error, she said.

"We always err on the side of caution when it comes to students," she said.

Symptoms of viral meningitis include severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness, joint pain, drowsiness or confusion and rash.