



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Now Is the Time For a Flu Shot

SACRAMENTO – California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Director and State Health Officer Dr. Karen Smith urges Californians to get the influenza (flu) vaccine as soon as it becomes available.

“Unlike some other infections, a person with influenza may be contagious and infect others before they have or show any symptoms,” said Dr. Smith. “Annual vaccination is the most reliable way to protect against infection and, therefore, stop transmission of influenza to others.”

Each year, flu causes millions of illnesses, hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations and thousands or sometimes tens of thousands of deaths in the United States. To reduce this threat, CDPH recommends the annual flu vaccine for everyone six months of age and older, including pregnant women.

Two of this season’s vaccine components, the influenza A (H3N2) and influenza B (Yamagata lineage) strains, have been updated to match the viruses Californians are likely to face during the upcoming flu season.

Flu can cause severe disease across all ages. According to the [California influenza surveillance report](#) recently published, there were 78 influenza-associated deaths reported in persons under 65 years of age in California during the 2014-15 influenza season.

Common symptoms of the flu include fever or feeling feverish, a cough and/or sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, chills, fatigue and body aches. Children may also have nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.

To stop the spread of flu and other respiratory illnesses, Californians should also:

- Stay home when sick
- Cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue and properly dispose of the used tissue
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

Dr. Smith encourages Californians to contact their health care provider, physician office, clinic or pharmacy about obtaining the flu vaccine. Some local health departments may

also offer low- or no-cost flu immunizations. For more information about the flu visit the [CDPH influenza web page](#). To find a flu vaccine location near you, visit [www.flu.gov](#).

www.cdph.ca.gov

