



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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California Department of Public Health Announces First Influenza Death This Season

SACRAMENTO - Dr. Ron Chapman, director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and state health officer, announced today the first confirmed influenza death of a person under the age of 65 reported for the 2014-2015 season. This fatality of an adult resident of Southern California is a somber reminder that influenza can be a serious and often deadly disease. Influenza activity remains at a regional level in California.

“Flu activity is beginning to increase statewide, including reports of hospitalizations and severe disease,” said Dr. Chapman. “We are early on in what could be a severe flu season, and I encourage everyone who has not yet gotten a flu vaccination to do so. The influenza vaccine remains the most effective way to protect yourself from the flu.”

Influenza is already widespread in 43 other states and there have been 21 pediatric influenza deaths nationwide so far this influenza season.

CDPH continues to monitor flu activity statewide and the availability of vaccine and antivirals, as well as hospital capacity. Influenza-related deaths in people under 65 years are reportable to CDPH.

Dr. Chapman also notes that in addition to getting vaccinated, it's important to practice good hand washing and other good health habits. People who are ill should take actions to stop the spread of germs such as:

- While sick, stay home and limit contact with others
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based rub
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

Those at highest risk of severe influenza – the elderly, pregnant women, infants, or people with other health conditions – who show flu symptoms should contact their physician immediately in order to get the most effective treatment for influenza. Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue.

Visit a [flu vaccine location near you](#) to get immunized. Some local health departments may also offer free or low-cost immunizations.

For more information on influenza and other respiratory disease surveillance reports visit: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/data/statistics/Pages/CISPDDataArchive.aspx>.

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