



COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

December 16, 2019

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

Imperial County Reports First Influenza-Associated Death

The first death due to influenza during the 2019-2020 flu season in Imperial County was reported this month. The case, a 3-year-old child with no underlying conditions, was positive for influenza B. It is unknown whether the child was vaccinated against influenza.

Last season, influenza was responsible for five deaths countywide. So far this season, 24 influenza-associated deaths have been reported statewide.

Influenza continues to circulate at higher levels in Imperial County. Nearly all confirmed cases have been influenza B. Flu activity is also widespread statewide.

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness. Serious outcomes of flu infection can result in hospitalization or death. Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk of serious flu complications. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year.

When indicated, antiviral treatment should be started as soon as possible after illness onset, ideally within 48 hours of symptom onset. However, antiviral treatment might have some benefits in patients with severe, complicated or progressive illness, and in hospitalized patients when started after 48 hours of illness onset.

Vaccination against influenza is recommended for all persons six months of age and older, including health-care personnel.

Children 6 months - 8 years of age getting vaccinated for the first time, and those who have only gotten one dose of flu vaccine previously, should get two doses of flu vaccine this season – spaced at least 4 weeks apart. It can take about two weeks after the second dose for protection against flu to begin.

Vaccine is available throughout the community including doctor's offices, the Public Health Department, and local pharmacies. The cost for the flu vaccine is \$5 at the health department.

For more information regarding the flu vaccine, contact the Public Health Department's Immunization Program at (442) 265-1394 or email jovanaaraujo@co.imperial.ca.us

###