



COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

March 13, 2020

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

Eight Influenza-Associated Deaths Reported in Imperial County

Another influenza-associated death was reported this week. The most recent case was 31 years old and had an underlying medical condition. A total of 8 influenza-associated deaths have been reported in Imperial County since the beginning of the flu season on September 29, 2019. Most had underlying medical conditions and it is unknown whether any of these individuals had received a vaccination against influenza this season.

Statewide there have been 598 influenza-associated deaths, including 15 pediatric deaths, since the start of the 2019-2020 influenza season.

Influenza (flu) continues to circulate in Imperial County. Influenza A (H1N1) is the predominate flu strain, although influenza B is also circulating. Statewide, flu activity remains widespread, and visits to outpatient clinics and hospitalizations due to respiratory illness continue to be higher than expected for this time of the year.

Influenza is a contagious viral respiratory illness. It can cause mild to severe illness. Serious outcomes of flu infection can result in hospitalization or death. Some people, such as those 65 years of age and older, young children, pregnant women, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk of serious flu complications. The best way to prevent the flu is to be vaccinated every 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 still available at some doctor's offices, the Public Health Department, and pharmacies. The cost for the flu vaccine is \$5 at the health department.

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

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