



COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

February 12, 2020

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

Imperial County Reports Five Influenza-Associated Deaths to Date

Five deaths due to influenza have been reported so far this season. The most recent case was 52 years of age and had multiple underlying medical conditions. It is unknown whether this individual had been vaccinated against influenza.

Last season, influenza was responsible for a total of five deaths countywide.

Since September 29, 2019, 266 influenza-associated deaths have been reported in California, including nine pediatric deaths. There was one pediatric death in Imperial County.

Influenza continues to circulate at higher levels in Imperial County. Influenza A (H1N1) virus now predominates in the county and statewide. Influenza B (Victoria) viruses also continue to circulate. Flu activity remains widespread in California, and visits to outpatient clinics and hospitalizations due to respiratory illness is higher than expected for this time of year.

Influenza (flu) 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 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 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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