



COUNTY OF ORANGE – HEALTH CARE AGENCY

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: (714) 834-2178

COUNTY OF ORANGE REPORTS FIRST INFLUENZA-RELATED DEATH

(Santa Ana) - The County of Orange Health Care Agency has confirmed Orange County's first influenza-related death in a person under 65 this season. The Public Health laboratory confirmed that the 50 year-old male, who was a resident of Westminster, was infected with influenza B virus.

"This is a sad and somber reminder of the serious threat posed by influenza," County Health Officer Dr. Eric Handler said. "It is important for everyone to continue practicing good respiratory and hand hygiene to limit the transmission of influenza germs from person to person, and to get vaccinated."

The County of Orange has seen an increase in the number of cases of both influenza A and influenza B reported in recent weeks, and eight people under the age of 65 have been hospitalized in intensive care for severe influenza. Getting the flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and your family. Influenza vaccination is recommended for everyone six months of age and older, but is particularly important for young children, pregnant women, adults over 50, and for those with chronic medical conditions.

The Health Care Agency is offering free seasonal influenza vaccinations for people 6 months of age and older who do not have a medical provider or health insurance coverage on a walk-in basis every Thursday from 8 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. at the Public Health Clinic located at 1725 West 17th Street, Santa Ana, CA 92701.

Influenza is a seasonal contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Flu symptoms may include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headaches, body aches, chills, and fatigue. Flu illness can be severe, leading to missed school or work, hospitalization, and even death.

Flu virus is mainly spread through droplets from coughs and sneezes. Remember these important everyday steps to help stop the spread of germs:

- cover your cough with a sleeve or tissue

- wash your hands often
- stay home if you are sick

Flu vaccinations are also available from health care providers, clinics, and pharmacies throughout Orange County. The most current local information, including vaccination locations, is available 24/7 at www.ocalthinfo.com/flu or by calling the Health Referral Line at (800) 564-8448, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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