



SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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Widespread Influenza Activity in San Benito County and California HEALTH ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Influenza activity is increasing nationwide, and it has been widespread in California since late December. San Benito County is also experiencing markedly elevated flu activity.

The predominant strain of influenza circulating this season—nationally, statewide, and locally—is influenza A (H3N2). Flu seasons dominated by H3 strains have historically been associated with increased hospitalizations and deaths. To date, it appears that most of the circulating H3N2 viruses match the H3N2 component of this year's influenza vaccine. No resistance to neuraminidase inhibitors such as oseltamivir (Tamiflu) or zanamivir (Relenza) has been detected this season.

Clinicians are requested to:

1. Vaccinate

- It is not too late to vaccinate! Continue to offer flu vaccine to all individuals over 6 months of age, including pregnant women, throughout the flu season.
- Only injectable flu vaccines are recommended this flu season.
- High priority groups for vaccination include children <5 years, adults ≥ 65 years, pregnant women with each pregnancy, residents of nursing homes/long-term care facilities, and individuals with certain chronic medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, heart disease, obesity, etc.)

2. Treat

- Rapidly treat all hospitalized flu patients with a neuraminidase inhibitor (e.g. oseltamivir or zanamivir), as well as all flu patients at high risk for complications. Do not wait for test results.

3. Educate

- Ensure that all staff stay home if ill, as well as practice proper respiratory etiquette by coughing/sneezing into their sleeves and washing hands frequently. Use posters as reminders.
- Remind patients and their families about ways to prevent the spread of flu, and refer them to the Santa Clara County Public Health Department website (www.sccphd.org) for more info.

4. Report deaths and severe flu cases requiring intensive care in anyone <65 years, as well as flu outbreaks in any age, by phone to Public Health Department at (831) 637-5367 or by faxed CMR to (831) 637-9073.

For more information, National flu reports are updated weekly at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly>.

Health Alert: Warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

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