

## News Release

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### Influenza Increases in Sacramento County

This week, the Sacramento County Division of Public Health is reporting an increase in cases of laboratory-confirmed influenza, compared to last week. The reports have identified three strains of flu currently circulating in Sacramento County - H1N1 (2009 pandemic strain), Influenza A and Influenza B. The flu vaccine, which is readily available, covers all three strains of flu that have been detected.

The California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend annual influenza vaccinations for everyone six months of age and older. A person's decision to receive the vaccination or not impacts their entire community, as a yearly flu vaccine not only protects the individual from illness, but also those around them. It's especially important to be vaccinated if you have regular contact with people more vulnerable to the complications of flu, including babies, children with asthma, and the elderly. Sacramento County Public Health Division also recommends pregnant women be vaccinated to protect themselves, and to pass on some immunity to their baby.

The flu is a serious respiratory illness caused by viruses. The flu comes on suddenly and symptoms may include fever, headache, tiredness, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, and body aches. Illness typically lasts two to seven days. Influenza may cause severe illness or even death in people such as the very young or very old, or those who have underlying health conditions. People who are ill with the flu are advised to stay home. Proper hand washing and cough etiquette are important in preventing spread of the flu.

Sacramento County Division of Public Health conducts influenza surveillance by monitoring over the counter sales of related pharmaceutical products such as thermometers and cough syrup, monitoring weekly influenza-like illness reports from select providers and monitoring reports of laboratory confirmed flu test from healthcare providers. Influenza cases requiring Intensive Care Unit (ICU) admission or resulting in death are reported to the State Department of Public Health. During the months of November and December of 2013, Sacramento County Public Health Division has received reports of five cases of flu admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) compared to one case reported to the ICU during the months of November and December in 2012.

If you need information about immunization services for children and adults, need to refer clients or get information regarding upcoming influenza clinics please contact the Sacramento County Immunization Assistance Program at 916-875-SHOT (7468) Monday-Friday between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm or use the Flu Vaccine Finder at [www.flu.gov/](http://www.flu.gov/) or the HealthMap Flu Vaccine Finder located at <http://flushot.healthmap.org/>

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