

News Release

Media Contacts: David Tonelli
(702) 383-6320

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health District Identifies Increase in Flu-Like Illness Cases

Flu vaccine still available for high-risk patients at main health district campus

(Las Vegas, Nev., - December 29, 2004) – The Clark County Health District Office of Epidemiology has identified an increase in the number of influenza-like illness reports throughout the county. Flu activity may increase in the near future; however, the beginning, length and severity of the flu season vary widely from year to year. The increase in flu-like illness was identified through the health district’s syndromic surveillance system, which monitors the number of patients visiting area medical facilities with symptoms of high fever (101° F or greater) and either cough or sore throat.

“Flu is most often spread when an ill person coughs or sneezes into the air, and a healthy person inhales respiratory droplets containing the virus,” said Dr. Donald Kwalick, chief health officer. “With an indication of flu activity in our area, we strongly emphasize the need for good health habits to minimize the spread of disease,” said Kwalick.

The following measures can help prevent getting or spreading germs:

- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.** Additionally, when you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect their health.
- **Stay home when you are sick.** Staying away from work, school, and errands when you are sick will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- **Clean your hands.** Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs are often spread when a healthy person touches something that is contaminated with germs then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

(more)

Flu vaccine remains available for high-risk adults at the Ravenholt Public Center at 625 Shadow Lane. Individuals eligible to receive a flu shot include:

- People 50 years of age and older
- People with underlying chronic medical conditions
- Women who will be pregnant during the influenza season
- Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities
- Health-care workers involved in direct patient care
- Out-of-home caregivers/adult household contacts of children aged <6 months
- Day care workers
- Health care workers
- School nurses
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) workers
- Household contacts of high-risk individuals

Pediatric vaccine doses are also at the Ravenholt Public Health Center and at these additional health district locations:

- East Las Vegas Public Health Center, 560 N. Nellis Blvd., Suite E-12
- Henderson Public Health Center, 129 W. Lake Mead Dr., #10
- North Las Vegas Public Health Center, 1820 E. Lake Mead Blvd., Suite F

The immunization clinics are open weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **Please note: the health district will be closed Friday, December 31 in observance of New Year's Day.**

For more information on health district flu vaccine availability, the general public may call the district's flu information line at (702) 385-INFO (4636).

###