



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Flu activity increases in Clark County

LAS VEGAS – The Southern Nevada Health District is reporting an increase in influenza activity and has received reports of the first flu-related deaths in Clark County. The deaths were reported in two middle-aged individuals and one elderly person.

“These deaths serve as a stark reminder of what a serious illness flu can be and the importance of taking preventive measures, such as getting a flu vaccination every year, to protect yourself and your family,” said Dr. Joe Iser, chief health officer of the Southern Nevada Health District.

Every year seasonal flu causes substantial illness and death in the United States, much of which could be prevented with vaccination and other preventive measures. It is recommended that everyone 6 months of age and older get a yearly flu vaccination. The health district encourages everyone to get flu vaccinations, especially persons at high-risk of complications from the flu including children younger than 5 (children younger than 2 years old are at highest risk), adults 65 years of age and older, and pregnant women. For information about the health district’s flu vaccine clinics call (702) 759-0850 or visit www.SNHD.info.

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated each year, but good health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You 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.
- Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or, mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Practice other good health habits. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work, or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

The CDC does not know exactly how many people die from seasonal flu each year. States are not required to report individual seasonal influenza cases or deaths of people older than 18 years of age and

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seasonal flu is infrequently listed on death certificates of people who die from flu-related complications. Many seasonal flu-related deaths occur one or two weeks after a person's initial infection. The ill person may develop a secondary infection, such as bacterial pneumonia, or the flu may aggravate an existing medical condition, such as congestive heart failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases. The CDC estimates that from the 1976-77 season to the 2006-2007 season, flu-associated deaths ranged from a low of approximately 3,000 to a high of about 49,000. Estimates are made using both death certificate and weekly influenza virus surveillance information.

For more information on influenza activity visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>.

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