



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Joy Alexiou
Public Information Officer
408-885-4164

San Jose, Calif. – The Santa Clara County Public Health Department has reported the County’s first death due to the H1N1 flu virus. The new flu virus has taken the life of a 44 year-old female resident of Santa Clara County who had underlying health conditions.

“Our sympathy goes out to this woman’s family and friends,” said Dr. Marty Fenstersheib, Health Officer for Santa Clara County. “Her death is a sad reminder of the seriousness of influenza.”

As of Monday, July 6, 2009, the Santa Clara County Public Health Department has reported a total of 172 cases of the pandemic flu virus H1N1; 109 confirmed cases; 63 probable cases, with 32 of these cases having been hospitalized. Since systematic testing for the virus has been replaced by testing hospitalized patients with flu-like-illness, these numbers do not accurately reflect how wide spread the virus is circulating in our community.

The median age of people with H1N1 in Santa Clara County is sixteen (16) years old, with the largest number of confirmed and probable cases in people between the ages of 5 and 24 years-old. At this time, there are few cases and no deaths reported in people older than 64 years of age, which is unusual when compared with seasonal flu. However, pregnancy and other previously recognized high-risk medical conditions that occur with seasonal influenza, appear to be associated with increased risk of complications from the H1N1 virus as well.

The H1N1 flu virus continues to circulate widely throughout our community with an increase in flu activity being reported. Increase flu activity is rare during summer months, so it remains important for all of us to continue to protect ourselves from the flu and take common sense precautions.

- If you are feeling sick stay home from work or school. If your symptoms get worse, call your physician or medical provider.
- Wash your hands with soap and hot water to get rid of germs and prevent the spread of disease, especially after coughing and sneezing. If you do not have soap and water, use a waterless hand gel with an alcohol base of at least 60%.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue whenever you sneeze and cough. Throw the tissue away in a waste basket. If you do not have a tissue, sneeze or cough into the fold of your elbow, without using your hands.

Everyday, we learn more about this new flu virus. The actions and guidance the Public Health Department provides may change in response to what we learn. That is our role, but you too have a role in protecting yourself and your family and it is important to stay informed. Health officials will provide additional information as it becomes available, but right now you can go to www.sccphd.org or visit www.cdc.gov for more information.

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