



SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Influenza A (H3N2v) Health Advisory

Current situation

A recent increase in human cases with influenza A (H3N2v) infection has been reported in several states (see <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swineflu/h3n2v-case-count.htm>). Since July 2012, there have been a total of 289 cases of H3N2 reported and one death. Most of these cases have been in children and presentation was similar to seasonal flu, a mild-self-limiting illness. The death occurred in an older adult with underlying medical conditions. Most cases had recent exposure to swine at agricultural fairs. No influenza A (H3N2v) cases have been detected in California to date.

This year's seasonal influenza vaccine will not likely provide coverage against H3N2v – however, routine seasonal influenza vaccination is still recommended.

Treatment with oseltamivir or zanamivir is effective for severe cases of H3N2v and recommendations for antiviral use are the same as with seasonal influenza.

This Health Advisory provides information and recommendations regarding enhanced surveillance for influenza A (H3N2v), including testing and reporting guidelines.

Current recommendations

During the summer months, influenza testing is recommended in the following:

- All persons with influenza-like illness (ILI)*, including severely ill/fatal cases and outpatients
- Acute respiratory outbreaks
- ILI in persons with recent swine exposures
- ILI in persons who can be epidemiologically linked to confirmed cases of novel or variant influenza.

* *Influenza-like illness = fever (>100°F or 37.8°C) and cough and/or sore throat, in the absence of a known cause*

Testing

- During the summer months, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) strongly recommends the continued screening for influenza A and B on ILI specimens and subtyping using the full subtyping panel.
- Testing is available at the Monterey County Public Health Laboratory (tel 831-755-4516) or the CDPH Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory (CDPH-VRDL) (See VRDL submittal form, [Appendix A](#)) or email CDPH at influenzasurveillance@cdph.ca.gov
- **Save specimens of ILI cases during the summer months, so that further subtyping and characterization can be performed at a public health laboratory.**

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
439 Fourth Street
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- Place Dacron-tipped swabs (cotton or calcium alginate swabs are not acceptable for PCR testing) in a standard container with 2-3 ml of viral transport media (VTM).
- Collect respiratory specimens for RT-PCR testing:
 - Upper respiratory samples suitable for RT-PCR include: nasopharyngeal (NP swabs), nasal swabs, throat swabs, nasal aspirate, nasal washes, NP wash, and NP aspirate.
 - For patients hospitalized with pneumonia, specimens from the lower respiratory tract should also be obtained. Lower respiratory tract samples suitable for RT-PCR include: bronchoalveolar lavage, bronchial wash, tracheal aspirate, and lung tissue.
- Specimens should be collected within the first 24-72 hours of onset of symptoms and no later than 5 days after onset of symptoms. The specimens should be kept refrigerated at 4°C and sent on cold packs if they can be received by the laboratory within 5 days of the date collected. If samples cannot be received by the laboratory within 5 days, they should be frozen at -70°C or below and shipped on dry ice.
- Questions regarding respiratory virus testing at CDPH-VRDL can be directed to Hugo Guevara [Email Hugo.Guevara@cdph.ca.gov or call 510-307-8565 or 510-248-9855 (cell)].

Reporting

Report suspect cases of novel influenza to San Benito County Health Department by fax 831-637-9073. **[or by e-mail?]**

Continue mandatory reporting of laboratory-confirmed influenza in fatal cases age 0-64 years by using the attached case report form ([Appendix B](#)).

Continue voluntary reporting of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases age 0-64 years requiring intensive care by using the attached case report form ([Appendix B](#)).

Additional resources

For additional information about the California Influenza Surveillance Program, please visit: [http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Influenza\(Flu\).aspx#](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Influenza(Flu).aspx#)

For additional information on influenza A (H3N2v) in the United States, please refer to CDC's website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swineflu/influenza-variant-viruses-h3n2v.htm>

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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