



412 LILLY RD NE
OLYMPIA, WA, 98506-5132
DISEASE REPORTING: (360)786-5470
INFORMATION: (360) 867-2533
Diana T. Yu, MD, MSPH, Health Officer

Mason County Public Health



8/6/2010

NOTICE: This health alert provides written guidance for health care professionals and others who may need to take action to prevent or control a notifiable condition. It is not intended to provide guidance for the general public.

Updated Information for the 2010 – 2011 Influenza Season

Current Influenza Activity A:H3N2 virus

During late June and July 2010 CDC saw the numbers of cases of seasonal influenza A (H3) viruses reported increase over previous months. There were two small RT-PCR confirmed outbreaks detected in the central part of the country. None of the patients had a history of recent travel and no epidemiological links were identified between the two outbreaks. Between June 20 and July 23, 2010 CDC also received additional influenza A (H3) positive specimens from 11 other states along with a smaller number of sporadic samples positive for 2009 H1N1 influenza A and B viruses. Localized summer outbreaks in the United States from seasonal influenza viruses and sporadic cases of influenza are detected each summer. Based on the information CDC currently has available the influenza A (H3) viruses received at CDC are expected to be similar to A/Perth/16/2009-like H3N2 viruses that were identified early in 2009 but have not yet circulated widely in the United States. Past vaccines have not included this strain, so last year's seasonal influenza vaccine would not be expected to provide substantial protection; however an A/Perth/16/2009-like H3N2 virus is included in the 2010-2011 seasonal influenza vaccine.

Influenza Treatment Recommended For High Risk Patients

Consider influenza when evaluating patients with acute respiratory illness, including pneumonia, even during the summer months. Neuraminidase inhibitors oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) and zanamivir (Relenza®) are currently recommended for use against circulating influenza viruses. The adamantanes (amantadine and rimantadine) are not recommended because of high levels of resistance to the drugs among circulating strains. Antiviral treatment, when clinically indicated should ***not be delayed pending definitive laboratory confirmation (RT-PCR and or viral culture) of influenza***. Rapid influenza diagnostic tests have limited sensitivity and false negative results are common. Negative rapid test should not guide decisions regarding treating patients with influenza antiviral medications. Influenza antiviral medications are most effective when initiated within the first 2 days of illness but may provide benefits for severely ill patients when initiated after 2 days.

Influenza Reporting Requirements

Beginning September 1, 2010, healthcare providers and hospitals should report the following to the Local Health Department:

- 1) Laboratory-confirmed influenza deaths in persons of all ages,
- 2) Suspected and laboratory-confirmed infections due to novel influenza virus, including avian influenza A (H5N1) virus (***2009 H1N1 virus is no longer considered novel***),
- 3) Outbreaks of influenza-like illness in an institutional setting (e.g., long term care facility).

Unexplained critical illness or death in persons 1 – 49 years old remains an immediately reportable condition. Public health encourages influenza testing in critically ill and deceased patients with an unexplained respiratory illness. Local health jurisdictions can facilitate



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influenza testing at the Washington State Public Health Laboratories for specimens from these patients.

To report influenza cases in Mason County call the Mason County Department of Health Services at 360-427-9670 ext 274 during business hours. If you are reporting an immediately reportable case or an emergency after hours call 360-427-7761.

To report influenza cases in Thurston County call the Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Department at 360-786-5470 during business hours. If you are reporting an immediately reportable case or an emergency after hours call 360-867-2661.

Influenza Testing at the Washington State Public Health Laboratories (PHL)

The Washington State Public Health Laboratories (PHL) performs influenza testing. Influenza testing and subtyping by PHL is primarily for surveillance purposes.

PHL will perform influenza testing and subtyping on specimens from:

- 1) Deceased patients suspected to have influenza
- 2) Patients suspected to be infected with a novel strain, including H5N1 influenza
- 3) Patients associated with outbreaks

All specimens must be approved by your local health jurisdiction prior to submission. Additional information regarding collecting, storing, shipping and testing specimens for influenza at PHL can be found at:

www.doh.wa.gov/ehsphl/Epidemiology/CD/swineflu/speccollecttrans.pdf

Influenza Vaccination Recommendations 2010-2011 Influenza Season

In February 2010, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted to expand the recommendation for annual influenza vaccination to include all people aged 6 months and older. This recommendation along with information about the strains used in this year's vaccine; A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)-like, A/Perth/16/2009 (H3N2)-like, and B/Brisbane/60/2008-like antigens (A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)-like antigen is derived from a pandemic 2009 influenza A (H1N1) virus, the same vaccine antigen used in the influenza A (H1N1) 2009 monovalent vaccines) and information about a new high dose vaccine for individuals ≥ 65 years was published in the July 29, 2010/Vol. 59 MMWR Prevention and Control of Influenza with Vaccines and may be found at:

www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr59e0729a1.htm?s_cid=rr59e0729a1_w

REPORT SUSPECT OR CONFIRMED NOTIFIABLE CONDITIONS TO:

Mason County Department of Health Services 360-427-9670 ext 274 during business hours. If you are reporting an immediately reportable conditions or an emergency and it is after hours call 360-427-7761.

Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Department 24-hour recorded reporting line at 360-786-5470. If you need to speak with someone during business hours call 360-867-2672. If you are reporting an immediately reportable conditions or an emergency and it is after hours call 360-867-2661.