



Communicable
Disease

County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

Advisory:	Update On Annual Local Influenza Activity
Principal Investigator:	Poki Stewart Namkung, M.D., MPH
Date:	February 3, 2011

INCIDENT

Since January 18, 2011, four cases of lab-confirmed influenza have been identified in Santa Cruz County. The first case, typed as 2009 seasonal H1N1 influenza, was found in a hospitalized patient who subsequently expired. Two cases, typed as H3 (strain type pending), are part of a large respiratory outbreak in a local congregate living facility. The fourth case, which is rapid screen positive and PCR pending, is also a part of the outbreak.

- The presenting symptoms of the patients with H3 influenza have been characterized as fever OR cough OR chest congestion OR nasal congestion. These patients did not have a “typical” ILI presentation.
- The presenting symptoms of the patient with 2009 seasonal H1N1 were fever, cough, and myalgia.
- Three of the four patients had not received an annual influenza vaccination—one had.
- Three of the four patients were rapid flu negative and PCR positive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider influenza in your differential (i.e. “Think Flu”) for patients presenting with fever OR cough OR chest congestion OR nasal congestion.
- Test patients who present with ILI. Don’t rely on rapid flu test results for confirming a diagnosis; the preferred test is a nasopharyngeal PCR.
http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Documents/Nasopharyngeal_Swab_Collection.pdf
- It is not too late to vaccinate. Seasonal influenza vaccine is still available and influenza activity typically peaks in February in California.
- Consider using antivirals if influenza is suspected.
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/antiviralrec2010.htm>
- If you employ staff that work at multiple health care facilities, consider instituting ILI symptom screening at the beginning of each shift.
- Report influenza to the Health Department (831-454-4114) in the following situations:
 - Individual cases of influenza are reportable if death has occurred or hospitalization in ICU was required for individuals < 65 years of age.
 - Institutional outbreaks of influenza or influenza-like-illness, e.g. skilled nursing facilities, schools, etc.

INFORMATION

For local informational updates and other alerts: www.santacruzhealth.org/