



## Public Health Brief

**Richard O. Johnson, M.D., MPH**

Public Health Officer

Office: 530-694-2235, Ext 249

e-mail: [rjohnson@alpinecountyca.gov](mailto:rjohnson@alpinecountyca.gov)

**Nichole Williamson**

HHS Director

Office: 530-694-2235

24/7/365 Emergency Contact Numbers

Dr. Johnson's cell: (760) 914-0496

Dispatch: 530-694-2231, Ext 330



Wednesday, January 16, 2019

## Influenza Activity Has Increased Significantly

Each year seasonal flu places a significant burden on the health of people in the United States. According to [new data](#) released by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), during the 2018-2019 season (through January 5, 2019):

- between about 6 and 7 million people have been sick with flu,
- up to half of those people have sought medical care for their illness,
- and between 69,000 and 84,000 people have been hospitalized from flu.
- there have been 16 influenza-associated deaths among children so far
- flu activity is elevated and widespread throughout California and northern Nevada
- it is expected that flu activity will remain elevated for at least a few more weeks, but it is too early to predict when the peak will occur.

The most common circulating flu virus so far is Type A H1N1, which fortunately tends to cause milder disease than the Type A H3N2 strain which circulated last year. It is estimated that the current vaccine will prove to be approximately 60% effective against this strain, which is similar to the H1N1 strain from last year.

CDC continues to recommend flu vaccination for all people 6 months and older as the best way to reduce the risk of flu and its potentially serious complications, including death in children. People who are very sick or who are at high risk of serious flu complications and get flu symptoms should see a health care provider early in their illness for possible treatment with a flu antiviral drug in order to reduce severe outcomes of influenza.

**Each year most influenza deaths occur among people who had no evidence of having received an annual influenza vaccine. It's not too late – call 530-694-2146 to get your vaccine!**



**Public Health**

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Alpine County Health Department, 75-B Diamond Valley Rd., Markleeville, CA 96120

Alpine County Board of Supervisors, Phone: (530) 694-2281

District 1: Donald M. Jardine, District 2: Ron Hames, District 3: Katherine Rakow,

District 4: Terry Woodrow, District 5: David Griffith

In addition to vaccination and appropriate use of antiviral drugs, we recommend everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of germs.

- If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth as germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like flu.

### **People at High Risk for Influenza Complications**

Although **everyone six months and older should get an annual influenza vaccine**, some people are more likely to get [influenza complications](#) that can result in hospitalization and sometimes death. Influenza can also make chronic health problems worse. The groups of people who are more likely to get serious flu-related complications if they get sick with influenza are listed below.

- [Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old](#)
- [Adults 65 years of age and older](#)
- [Pregnant women](#) (and women up to two weeks postpartum)
- Residents of nursing homes and other [long-term care facilities](#)
- [American Indians and Alaskan Natives](#) seem to be at higher risk of flu complications
- [Asthma](#)
- Neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions [including disorders of the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nerve, and muscle such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy (seizure disorders), stroke, intellectual disability (mental retardation), moderate to severe developmental delay, muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury].
- Chronic lung disease (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD] and cystic fibrosis)
- [Heart disease](#) (such as congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease)
- Blood disorders (such as sickle cell disease)
- Endocrine disorders (such as [diabetes](#))
- Kidney disorders
- Liver disorders
- Metabolic disorders (such as inherited metabolic disorders and mitochondrial disorders)
- Weakened immune system due to disease or medication (such as people with [HIV or AIDS](#), or [cancer](#), or those on chronic steroids)
- People younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy
- People with extreme obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or more)

For more information, go to:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/index.html>



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Alpine County Health Department, 75-B Diamond Valley Rd., Markleeville, CA 96120  
Alpine County Board of Supervisors, Phone: (530) 694-2281  
District 1: Donald M. Jardine, District 2: Ron Hames, District 3: Katherine Rakow,  
District 4: Terry Woodrow, District 5: David Griffith