



Health Advisory: Influenza in Health Care Settings (#1502340)

Minnesota Department of Health Thurs Jan 8 15:00 CDT 2015

Action Steps:

Local and tribal health departments: Please forward to long-term care facilities, hospitals and clinics in your jurisdiction.

Hospital and clinics: Please distribute to healthcare providers.

Healthcare providers:

- In acute care and long term care settings, discourage visitors that are ill from entering facilities by posting signs and screening upon entry.
- Promote prevention strategies: vaccine, hand washing with soap and water, covering your cough, and staying home when sick.
- Utilize antivirals for treatment and prophylaxis of patients/residents in your care.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for prevention and management of influenza in long-term care settings: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/ltc-facility-guidance.htm> and acute care settings: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/healthcaresettings.htm>

The 2014-15 influenza season is emerging as a particularly severe one for Minnesota based on surveillance data compiled by MDH. This week, a fourth pediatric influenza-associated death was identified in Minnesota. Outbreaks in long-term care facilities are increasing, and hospitalizations due to influenza remain elevated. Although the winter break for K-12 schools has slowed down the number of influenza-like illness (ILI) outbreaks reported, we continue to see activity in schools. With this in mind, use all the tools available to reduce the impact of influenza disease: vaccine, antivirals, infection control, staying home when sick.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved the neuraminidase inhibitor peramivir (Rapivab) to treat influenza infection in adults 18 and older. Peramivir is the first neuraminidase inhibitor approved for intravenous (IV) administration. As before, oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and zanamivir (Relenza) are approved for the treatment and prevention of influenza and recommended for the 2014-15 season. The supply of antivirals in the state is plentiful and previous reports of supply delays around the state have now abated.

Influenza vaccination is recommended for any persons who have not been vaccinated yet this season, as vaccine may still offer benefit. This includes people who may have already been ill with flu this season; flu vaccine protects against three or four different viruses and it's possible that other viruses will circulate later in the season. Vaccine for the current season is still available. For those providers who participate in the Minnesota Vaccines for Children (MnVFC), there is still influenza vaccine available to order for MnVFC eligible children.

For more information regarding influenza in Minnesota please visit:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/flu/> or call the Minnesota Department of Health at 651.201.5414 or 1-877-676-5414