



COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

Patrick S. Blacklock
County Administrator

Beth Gabor
Manager of Operations & Strategy

625 Court Street, Room 202 ▪ Woodland, CA 95695
(530) 666-8042 ▪ FAX (530) 668-4029
www.yolocounty.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 11, 2017

Contact: Beth Gabor, Public Information Officer
(530) 666-8042 [w] ▪ (530) 219-8464 [c]

First Flu Death in Yolo County Confirmed

(Woodland, CA) – Yolo County confirms the first influenza associated death in the 2016-2017 influenza season. The death occurred in a middle-aged man who had significant, pre-existing medical conditions.

“Even though flu activity in California and much of the country is currently at relatively low levels, the occurrence of this death should serve to inform everyone that influenza is circulating within our county and can potentially cause very serious illness,” said Yolo County Health Officer Ron Chapman, MD, MPH. “Vaccination is the best method to protect oneself, reducing the chance the person who receives the flu shot will become ill, and reducing the spread of flu in family, friends and the community.”

Annually, thousands of people nationwide are hospitalized and die from the flu or its complications. Although each season is different, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that an average of 24,000 influenza-related deaths occur in the U.S. each year. Public health officials anticipate flu activity will increase as the winter season progresses and urges everyone older than 6 months to get the flu shot every year. Fortunately, flu vaccine is still available through your healthcare provider, local pharmacy or the Yolo County Health Department.

Surveillance conducted by the CDC indicates this year’s vaccine closely matches the viral strains currently circulating and should provide good protection against disease. ‘Community protection’ is important for those living in households or working with people who are more susceptible to severe outcomes from the flu (i.e. infants, pregnant women, elderly and people with medical conditions that may reduce their immunity).

Both those vaccinated and unvaccinated, who are at higher risk for severe influenza should seek medical evaluation if they experience a flu-like illness so they can be considered for treatment with an antiviral medication. These medications are most effective when they are started soon after symptoms begin.

Key Points:

- Yolo County and the CDC recommend flu shots for everyone 6 months of age and older. Note: it can take up to two weeks to develop immunity from vaccination.
- Practice good hand and respiratory hygiene to help reduce the chance of catching the flu.
- To prevent the spread of the flu, limit contact with others and stay home if sick.

Resources:

- Information about the flu can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>.

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