

Oct. 9, 2009

News media calls to David Hass at (630) 682-7979, ext. 7374.

Tragic death attributed to novel H1N1 influenza Is reminder about serious threat from H1N1

The tragic death of a teenager in Naperville has been confirmed to be related to novel H1N1 influenza, with further testing in progress to confirm a possible underlying condition. The health department extends its sympathy and deepest condolences to the individual's family.

Investigation is ongoing, and further information will be provided as appropriate, based on consultation with the Coroner's Office and with the family.

The DuPage County Health Department reminds DuPage County residents of the serious threat posed by novel H1N1 influenza, and actions they may take to help prevent illness and spread of influenza in the community.

The health department is urging people to get vaccinated against the seasonal flu and novel H1N1 flu, as vaccine is distributed and becomes available.

According to CDC, there have been more than a million cases of H1N1 flu in the U.S., and during the 2008-2009 flu season, there were 128 influenza-associated pediatric deaths, 60 of which were due to novel H1N1 influenza. In Illinois, there have been 19 deaths due to H1N1 influenza in 2009.

This is the first death with H1N1 influenza in a DuPage County resident. As has been noted in Illinois and around the country, fatalities due to influenza continue to occur, especially but not exclusively, when there are underlying medical conditions that increase the risk of severe illness.

In addition to getting vaccinated, County residents can stay healthy and limit the spread of flu by remembering the 3 Cs:

CLEAN – wash your hands frequently to prevent the spread of germs.

COVER – your cough and sneeze with a tissue or sleeve, not your hand.

CONTAIN – contain your germs. Stay home if you are sick.

Persons experiencing signs of severe illness (such as difficulty breathing, dehydration, confusion, pain or pressure in chest or abdomen) should seek medical attention immediately, and persons with underlying

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conditions, including pregnant women, should promptly contact their physician if they develop influenza-like illness.

Additional information on seasonal flu and novel H1N1 flu is available on www.flu.gov or www.protectdupage.org, or the DuPage County emergency information web site. There are fact sheets on the web site with information on when people should consult a physician if they become ill with flu.

A hotline for DuPage County residents with questions about novel H1N1 influenza is also available at the DuPage County Health Department.

Residents may call (630) 221-7600. The hotline is available 24/7.

Residents can now begin receiving updates on the novel H1N1 flu via Twitter, which is a real-time short messaging service that works over multiple networks and devices. Twitter can be accessed by an individual's computer or cell phone and it will let residents receive news and updates instantly. Those interested in receiving information via Twitter, but do not currently have an account, can sign up by visiting <http://twitter.com/>. Once an account is established, simply add "**ProtectDuPage**" (be sure to put both words together) to your list. It's that simple.

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