



Orange County Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment, 1719 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. Santa Ana, CA 92706, (714) 834-8180

**In the previous three weeks, three flu-associated deaths have been reported in Orange County residents under 65 years of age.** It is still not too late to vaccinate! Consider influenza in your patients with fever and/or respiratory symptoms. CDC recommends antiviral medications for treatment of seasonal influenza, especially in patients with severe disease or at high risk for complications.

- **Summary of CDC Recommendations for Treatment of Influenza:** Evidence from past influenza seasons and the 2009 H1N1 pandemic has shown that treatment with antiviral medications can reduce severe outcomes of influenza and may provide the following benefits: shorter duration of fever and illness symptoms, reduced risk of complications from influenza (e.g., otitis media in young children, pneumonia, respiratory failure) and death, and shorter duration of hospitalization.
  - Antiviral treatment (oseltamivir [Tamiflu] or zanamivir [Relenza]) is recommended as early as possible for any patient with confirmed or suspected influenza who 1) is hospitalized 2) has severe, complicated, or progressive illness or 3) is at higher risk for influenza complications.
  - Antiviral treatment also can be considered for any previously healthy, symptomatic outpatient not at high risk with confirmed or suspected influenza on the basis of clinical judgment, if treatment can be initiated within 48 hours of illness onset.
  - Decisions about starting antiviral treatment should not wait for laboratory confirmation of influenza. Clinical benefit is greatest when antiviral treatment is administered early, ideally within 48 hours of symptom onset. Antiviral treatment might still be beneficial in patients with severe, complicated, or progressive illness and in hospitalized patients when started after 48 hours of illness onset.

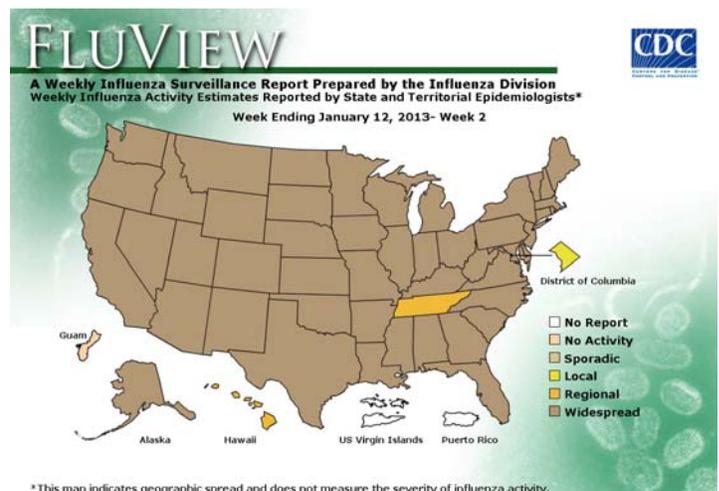


For more information, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/summary-clinicians.htm>.

- **Persons aged ≥6 months who have not yet been vaccinated this season should be vaccinated and vaccination efforts should continue as long as influenza viruses are circulating.** Early estimates of seasonal influenza vaccine effectiveness this season indicate moderate (62%) effectiveness, based on data from 1,155 children and adults during December 3, 2012–January 2, 2013. However, these early estimates underscore that some vaccinated persons will become infected with influenza; therefore, antiviral medications should be used as recommended above for treatment, regardless of vaccination status. See the January, 18, 2013 issue of *MMWR* at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr).
- **FDA has reported a shortage of oseltamivir phosphate (Tamiflu) for oral suspension (6mg/mL 60 mL):** FDA-approved instructions for the emergency compounding of an oral suspension from Tamiflu 75 mg capsules are included in the current package insert and are also posted separately on the manufacturer's website. For more information, visit: <http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/DrugShortages/ucm314742.htm#oseltamivir>.

## Influenza Update

- Influenza activity has been upgraded to widespread in California, similar to most areas of the U.S.
- Nationally and in Orange County the majority (~80%) of flu viruses tested are influenza A with influenza A/H3 being the predominate subtype.
- Orange County continues to see increases in the number of influenza detections and severe influenza reports (ICU/deaths less than 65 y.o.). Increases in respiratory outbreaks in schools and long term care facilities have also been noted.



If you have any comments about this flyer, contact Sandra Okubo, MPH or Michele Cheung, MD at (714) 834-8180. To receive this newsletter by email, please contact us at [epi@ochca.com](mailto:epi@ochca.com).