



This report includes information through 10/26/05.

Flu Season has begun. Orange County has received five reports of confirmed influenza this season; two were severe influenza cases affecting children. Please help monitor the impact of influenza and guide prevention and control efforts by participating in OC flu surveillance. Health care providers and labs are encouraged to contact Pamela Roa Hipp at OC Epidemiology (714-834-8180) for more information.

- **Flu vaccine** is available for high-risk groups at many locations throughout the county. For more information on upcoming flu clinics, see <http://www.ochealthinfo.com/public/flu/locations.htm>. For information on flu vaccine clinics at local retail pharmacies, see <http://www.findaflushot.com>. The flu vaccine is very effective (i.e., 70-90%) in preventing influenza among healthy adults younger than 65 years of age and plays a critical role in reducing death, hospitalization and pneumonia in elderly patients.
- **Please see the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) Recommendations for the 2005-06 Season** at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5408a1.htm> for a complete review of influenza vaccination recommendations.
 - **New:** Persons with any condition (e.g., cognitive dysfunction, spinal cord injuries, seizure disorders or other neuromuscular disorders) that can compromise respiratory function or the handling of respiratory secretions or that can increase the risk of aspiration should be vaccinated annually.
 - **Special emphasis:** All health care workers (HCW) should be immunized annually against influenza. Facilities that employ HCW should provide vaccine to workers by using approaches that maximize immunization rates.
 - For flyers to promote HCW vaccination visit: <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dcdc/izgroup/pdf/IMM-824flumist-HCW.pdf>
- Prevent illness and disease by promoting proper respiratory hygiene in the healthcare setting. For posters, see: <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dcdc/izgroup/pdf/imm783k.pdf> & http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/pdf/covercough_hcp11x17.pdf.

Avian Influenza Update

- As of October 24, 2005, 121 human cases of avian influenza H5N1 and 62 deaths have been reported from Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, and Cambodia since avian H5N1 outbreaks began in 2003. Additionally, infected birds have been detected in China, Siberian Russia, Kazakhstan, Romania, Turkey, and Mongolia.
- Clinicians should maintain a high index of suspicion for influenza A (H5N1) in patients with fever and respiratory symptoms arriving or returning from Asia. Please consult OC Epidemiology (714-834-8180) for diagnostic and infection control recommendations. For more information, see <http://www.ochealthinfo.com/epi/af/index.htm>

Additional Information:

- General: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>
 OC: http://www.ochealthinfo.com/epi/flu/general_info.htm
 CA: <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dcdc/vrdl/html/flu/Fluintro.htm>
 USA: www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/

California and USA

- During week 41 (week ending 10/15/05), influenza occurred at a low level in the United States. Idaho reported local influenza activity and eight states and New York City reported sporadic activity.

