



Eastern Idaho Public Health

1250 Hollipark Drive • Idaho Falls, ID 83401 • Phone: (208) 522-0310 • www.EIPH.Idaho.gov

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 5, 2017

Contact: Mimi Taylor, PIO
Office: (208) 533-3155

Flu Activity Increasing in the Region. Free Flu Vaccine Available for the Uninsured.

(SE Idaho) – Cases of influenza, better known as “the flu”, are increasing throughout the region with the first flu-related death reported in Eastern Idaho Public Health’s boundaries. The death occurred in a woman over the age of 70. This death, along with three others in the state of Idaho, take the flu-related death toll to four (as of January 5, 2017). January is a peak month for influenza infections so now is the time to act to protect yourself and your family.

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness. Most people who get influenza recover after a few days, but some people may develop serious complications and even die. Symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and sometimes a cough and sore throat. People who are especially vulnerable to complications of the flu include:

- Pregnant women
- People 50 years of age and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, heart or lung diseases
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu

Receiving the flu shot each year is the single best prevention strategy against getting ill with influenza. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older.

While supplies last, Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) has **FREE** flu vaccine available for uninsured individuals. For those with insurance, vaccine is available and we bill Medicare, Medicaid, and most major insurance companies. Individuals are urged to call now and schedule an appointment to receive their flu vaccine. A list of office locations and phone numbers can be found at www.EIPH.Idaho.gov.

In addition to being vaccinated, people can protect themselves from the influenza virus and other respiratory illnesses by practicing good health habits. To avoid infection, you are urged to:

- More -

- Wash your hands frequently, especially after using the restroom and before touching or eating food. Use warm water and soap and wash for at least 20 seconds. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth until you have washed your hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing to prevent infecting other people.
- Avoid people who appear sick and stay home from work/school/childcare when sick.
- Get plenty of rest, drink liquids, eat nutritious foods and take part in physical activity.

For more information about influenza or to schedule an interview, please contact Mimi Taylor at (208) 521-6722.

###