



1020 Washington St. N, Twin Falls, Idaho
208-737-5900 www.phd5.idaho.gov

October 23, 2009

PRESS RELEASE-For Immediate Release

Contact: Mary Jensen, Epidemiologist Manager, 737-5969

H1N1 Virus Contributor to Teen's Death

TWIN FALLS- The H1N1 influenza virus contributed this week to the death of a male teenager in Twin Falls who had underlying health conditions.

“The death of a resident of our community saddens us deeply, and our sympathies go out to his family and other loved ones,” said Rene LeBlanc, South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) Director. “Although most cases of H1N1 recover without medical attention, this is an unfortunate reminder that all flu viruses can be deadly. We must continue to be vigilant in preventing the spread of the H1N1 influenza and seasonal influenza.”

South central Idaho has seen an increase in flu-like illness during the past month. This death will be the eighth in Idaho related to the H1N1 virus since September 1, and the first H1N1 related death in southern Idaho.

H1N1 influenza and seasonal flu spread through the air, usually through coughing or sneezing by infected people. H1N1 symptoms typically start with a fever, sore throat, cough, sneezing, headache, body aches, chills, and fatigue. Some people, mostly children, have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

The first shipments of H1N1 vaccine arrived in southern Idaho earlier this month. The initial supplies will go to vaccine target groups, but larger quantities are expected for public vaccinations in the coming weeks. People who need the most protection from H1N1 and are a target group of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-vaccination are:

- Pregnant women
- Children from age 6 months through 24 years
- People who live with and/or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- Healthcare and emergency response workers
- Anyone from age 24 through 64 with chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease or a condition that weakens the immune system

SCPHD advises everyone to help protect themselves from the flu with these steps:

- Wash hands with soap and water often or use hand sanitizer
- Cover your cough and sneeze with your sleeve or a tissue, not your hand
- Stay home if you're sick
- Stay six-feet away from people who are sick
- Eat a healthy diet and get plenty of rest

Keep updated on H1N1 influenza in south central Idaho on the SCPHD website, www.phd5.idaho.gov.

###