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Public Health Alert

Provider Notice

Seasonal Onset of Increasing Incidence of Influenza

As of mid-December, Influenza activity has become widespread nationally and in California. However, it has remained sporadic in Santa Barbara County. The State trends are predictive of local activity; therefore, providers should expect the incidence of Influenza to follow its typical pattern and rise substantially in January and reach its peak in late February or early March. The predominant strain has been A (H1N1) pmd09. This matches with one of the strains included in the vaccine. In California, none of the isolated and tested strains have shown resistance to oseltamivir.

It is still not too late to offer Influenza vaccine to your patients, particularly higher risk populations of children age 5 years and younger, pregnant women, everyone over 64, and those with medical conditions that predispose to increased risk of severe disease or complications with their underlying conditions. However, all persons age 6 months and over should be encouraged to get vaccinated.

Please remind and advise all health office personnel regarding the recommended steps to prevent transmission of infection in health facilities.

You may wish to visit the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Influenza webpage to track the season:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Flu-Reports.aspx>

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department issues an Influenza update every two weeks that can be viewed at:

<http://www.countyofsb.org/phd/epidemiology/seasonal-flu.sbc>