



## NEWS RELEASE

### Public Health

**CONTACT:**

Lana Culp  
Public Health Information Officer  
(909) 387-9147  
[Lana.Culp@dph.sbcounty.gov](mailto:Lana.Culp@dph.sbcounty.gov)

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## First confirmed pediatric influenza-related death in the county

The San Bernardino County Department of Public Health confirms the county's first pediatric death due to influenza (or flu) for the 2019-2020 season. A child less than a year old died on Nov. 21 from complications associated with the influenza infection.

"The family has our sincerest condolences," said Dr. Maxwell Ohikhuare, San Bernardino County Health Officer. "This is a reminder that flu can be a serious and sometimes deadly disease. I strongly recommend everyone receive the flu shot."

The flu shot remains the most effective protection from the flu. A seasonal flu shot is recommended every year to all persons age six months and older to help protect from the flu. The best protection for children under six months old and others who are medically unable to be vaccinated is for the rest of the community to be vaccinated (known as herd immunity).

Flu activity is starting to increase and has yet to peak in California. This could be a severe flu season as hospitalizations and severe disease have already been reported statewide.

The flu is caused by the influenza viruses and is easily spread from one person to another. Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue.

Those at highest risk of severe flu (the elderly, pregnant women, infants or people with other health conditions) who show flu symptoms should contact their medical provider immediately in order to get the most effective treatment for flu.

### **In addition to getting the flu vaccine, prevent the spread of illness by following these steps:**

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and properly dispose of used tissues
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and/or mouth
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after a cough or sneeze (alcohol-based hand sanitizers may be used if soap and water are not available)
- Avoid close contact with sick people and stay home when you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others
- Contact your medical provider for treatment options

To find a flu shot clinic near you, visit [flushot.healthmap.org](http://flushot.healthmap.org). For more information on flu activity please visit the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health website at [www.sbcounty.gov/dph](http://www.sbcounty.gov/dph), or contact the Communicable Disease Section at 1-800-722-4794, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

