

Welcome to *CD News Flash*, through which you can get quick and reliable information about communicable diseases that you may have been hearing about in the news. This newsletter is intended mainly for our community partners and will NOT be distributed routinely through all our usual email lists. **If you are interested in continuing to receive this newsletter, please email epi@ochca.com with subject line "Subscribe CD News Flash".**

Influenza Activity Still High in Orange County

The Orange County Health Care Agency continues to receive large numbers of reports of influenza, including severe cases (less than 65 years of age who were hospitalized in intensive care or who died), and outbreaks. Circulating viruses are mainly influenza A H3N2 which has been associated with increased hospitalizations and lower vaccine effectiveness in past seasons. CDC recommends:

- **Get vaccinated:** It's not too late to get vaccinated. Even in years with lower vaccine effectiveness (e.g., 48% in 2015-16), influenza vaccine prevented an estimated 5 million illnesses, 2.5 million medical visits, and 71,000 hospitalizations due to flu. For more info on where to get vaccinated, see <http://ochealthinfo.com/phs/about/family/flu>.
- **Stop germs:** Use everyday preventive actions to avoid getting sick with flu and/or passing it to others. People with flu symptoms should stay at home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine. Covering your cough, handwashing and routine cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces can help decrease the spread of illness. For more information, see www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/general/take3-Poster.pdf. Guidance for schools and child cares is available here: www.cdc.gov/flu/school/index.htm.
- **Antiviral drugs:** Antiviral drugs can shorten illness with influenza, make it milder, and prevent complications. People with influenza symptoms who are in the hospital, have severe progressive illness, or who are at increased risk for complications of influenza due to age or underlying medical conditions may benefit from antiviral drugs. Antivirals should be started as soon as possible in these groups and should NOT be delayed waiting for test results. Per the California Department of Public Health, there is currently NO state or national shortage of antivirals. Pharmacies can contact their wholesalers directly to obtain medications if needed.

Hepatitis A Still in the News

The hepatitis A outbreaks in San Diego and Los Angeles seem to be winding down. There is no outbreak in Orange County and no new cases. HCA continues to outreach to at-risk persons, including promoting and providing hepatitis A vaccinations. See: www.ochealthinfo.com/OCHEpA.



CDC SAYS:

"TAKE 3" ACTIONS TO FIGHT THE FLU

1
Vaccinate

2
Stop
Germs

3
Antiviral
Drugs

Norovirus is not just on cruise ships!

Outbreaks of norovirus plague schools, long term care facilities, and other group settings every year. Norovirus is also one of the most common causes of foodborne illness. This highly contagious virus causes vomiting and diarrhea and needs special attention to handwashing, hygiene, and cleaning/disinfection. For more information, see: www.cdc.gov/norovirus/preventing-infection.html.