



# News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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**The Flu is on the Rise in California  
*CDPH Reminds You to Get a Flu Shot***

SACRAMENTO - Following the normal seasonal pattern, influenza activity is on the rise in California and nationwide. Many California counties, and other states, are reporting patients who are critically ill with influenza, including healthy young adults.

The H1N1 strain appears to be the predominant strain circulating so far in California and in the rest of the United States this flu season. The H1N1 virus, which emerged during the 2009 pandemic, causes more illness in children and young adults, compared to older adults. It causes severe illness in all age groups, including those younger than 65 years of age. This year's influenza vaccine protects against the strains circulating in the state, including H1N1.

"It is not too late to get the flu vaccine," urged Dr. Ron Chapman, director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and state health officer. "A yearly flu vaccine is the most important step in preventing influenza. It's important to remember that unlike other vaccine preventable diseases, it is necessary to get a flu shot every year."

The vaccine is available now. Once vaccinated, it takes approximately two weeks before you are fully protected against the flu. An influenza vaccine is especially important for pregnant women and other people at higher risk for severe influenza.

"It's impossible to predict the severity of a flu season, but the best way to prevent spread of the flu is to get vaccinated," said Dr. Chapman.

In addition to getting vaccinated, it's crucial to practice good health habits. If you become ill, you should take actions to stop the spread of germs, including:

- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Wash your hands with soap/water
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

You can also protect your health by eating a nutritious diet and getting enough sleep. If you think you have influenza, contact your physician.

Visit a [flu vaccine location near you](#) to get immunized. Some local health departments may also offer free or low-cost immunizations.

[www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)

