

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Secretary Alfredo Vigil, MD

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Media contact: Chris Minnick
575-649-0754

Dept. of Health Announces Pediatric H1N1-Related Influenza Death in Bernalillo County
Department Advises People at Higher Risk for Complications to Get Vaccinated Soon

(Las Cruces) -- The New Mexico Department of Health announced today that an 11-year-old male with H1N1 influenza from Bernalillo County died Nov. 1st. The boy had a chronic medical condition that put him at higher risk for serious complications and was hospitalized at the University of New Mexico Hospital in Albuquerque since Oct. 11.

“We express our deepest sympathies to the family who is dealing with the heartbreaking loss of their child,” said Health Secretary Alfredo Vigil, MD. “This tragedy should remind every New Mexican that influenza can cause serious complications and even death, so it is important for everyone to follow the prevention guidelines to minimize the spread of the disease.”

So far in 2009, there have been 22 deaths related to H1N1 influenza in New Mexico. A complete listing of all H1N1-related deaths can be found on the Department of Health’s H1N1 website at www.nmhealth.org/H1N1.

The Department of Health recommends people who are at higher risk for complications and are experiencing typical, mild flu symptoms that include fever, sore throat and cough to call their healthcare provider or a local community health center for consideration for treatment with antiviral medications. If people do not have a healthcare provider, they can call the Department of Health’s Health Alert Hotline at 1-866-850-5893.

The Department of Health is also recommending the following people either stay home or seek medical care if they are experiencing flu-like symptoms: People who are experiencing typical, mild symptoms of influenza and are not at higher risk for flu complications should stay home and avoid public places until they are well. People who develop severe symptoms of influenza should seek care immediately from the emergency room. Severe symptoms include shortness of breath, rapid breathing, dehydration, or decreased responsiveness.

People at higher risk for serious complications include pregnant women, household members/caretakers of infants less than 6 months old, children 6 to 59 months of age, children 5 to 18 years with certain chronic health conditions that increase their risk of complications from flu, and healthcare workers and emergency medical service personnel with direct patient care.

The Department of Health is encouraging people who are at a higher risk for developing serious complications from H1N1 to get vaccinated as soon as possible. The Department of Health is encouraging people in priority groups to call their primary healthcare providers to ask if they are providing the H1N1 vaccine. People in the target groups without insurance or a healthcare provider, or whose provider will not offer the H1N1 vaccine, can get the vaccine from a local

public health office. Call your local public health office first to check the availability of H1N1 vaccine. Public health offices are listed in the phonebook's blue pages under state government or online at www.nmhealth.org.

The Department of Health has ordered 124,310 doses of nasal and injectable H1N1 vaccine so far and expects to receive 1.2 million doses by the end of January 2010. Vaccine is arriving in small amounts and is being distributed to providers and public health offices statewide.

For information about scheduled flu shot clinics, call toll-free at 866-681-5872 or go online to www.nmivc.org/cliniclist.php.

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