



*Promoting and Protecting Public Health*

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### **First Seasonal Flu Case Confirmed in Douglas County**

Douglas County has its first laboratory confirmed case of seasonal influenza. The case of influenza B was confirmed in a 14-month-old child who had received only one dose of vaccine. Two doses are recommended for maximum effectiveness for first time vaccine recipients aged six months to eight years.

It is the state's second confirmed case of influenza B. Three cases of influenza A also have been reported in Nebraska, but flu activity remains sporadic.

"This year's flu season appears to be following a familiar pattern, with the first cases appearing in early January and the season peaking late this month or early next month," Health Director Dr. Adi Pour said. "Getting a flu shot remains your best protection from the seasonal influenza, and there continues to be enough vaccine to go around."

Other tips to reduce your chances of getting or spreading the flu include:

- Avoid close contact, stay home when you're sick
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
- Wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Get plenty of sleep, stay physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses and can cause mild to severe illness or sometimes even death. Every year in the United States, on average about 5 percent to 20 percent of the population gets the flu and more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications. The flu claims about 36,000 lives each year, including many elderly who develop pneumonia.

Certain groups, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions - such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease - are at high risk for serious flu complications.

Flu symptoms include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, running or stuffy nose and muscle aches. There also may be symptoms that affect the stomach such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, but those are more common in children than in adults.

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