



Yamhill County
Health and Human Services
Public Health

ALERT

**COPY AND DISTRIBUTE TO
Health Care Providers**

To: Health Care Providers in Yamhill County

From: Yamhill County Public Health

Date: **12/02/2022**

Regarding: **Increased influenza activity with limited hospital capacity**

Phone number for follow-up: **(503) 434-7483**



State of Oregon
Health Alert Network

The United States is currently experiencing high levels of respiratory virus activity in multiple jurisdictions, and these infections are straining the health care system nationwide. On November 14, Governor Kate Brown issued [Executive Order No. 22-23](#), declaring a state of emergency in Oregon due to a surge in pediatric respiratory infections.

Influenza activity in Oregon is increasing rapidly and will further strain hospital capacity.

Influenza can cause severe disease in all age groups—particularly in the elderly, young children, pregnant women, individuals with underlying medical conditions, and persons from communities of color and tribal communities. **Vaccination is the best means of preventing influenza, and vaccine is now widely available. Annual vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months and older. Influenza viruses circulating recently appear well matched to vaccine strains.**

In addition to vaccination, the risk of influenza is reduced by masking, respiratory hygiene (e.g., covering coughs and sneezes), hand hygiene and disinfection of high-touch surfaces.

The Oregon Health Authority encourages all individuals to take common-sense steps to prevent influenza, including:

- Getting vaccinated against influenza.
- Wearing a mask indoors in public places throughout the influenza season.
- Asking others to wear a mask around children under 2 years of age (who are unable to mask).
- Washing hands thoroughly and frequently and keeping high-touch surface areas clean and regularly disinfected.
- Staying home when sick and keeping children out of school and daycare when they are sick.

Health care providers, health care systems and pharmacies should take steps now to stem the surge in respiratory virus activity and spare hospital beds:

- All providers should refamiliarize themselves with [management of influenza-like illness during influenza and COVID-19 cocirculation](#), including broad indications for influenza antiviral medications such as oseltamivir, which reduce the risk of hospitalization.
- Outpatient providers, including urgent care clinics, should maximize influenza vaccine and antiviral medicine availability, consider expanding hours of operation, and screen patients to prevent emergency department and hospital overload.
- Pharmacies should increase influenza antiviral therapy (e.g., oseltamivir) stock now. Local shortages are delaying critical oseltamivir therapy for patients at risk of severe disease. National supplies are still available.
- Health care systems and providers should provide information to families about the signs of respiratory distress that require urgent evaluation.
- Hospitals should maximize staffing, bed capacity and coordination across the state such as through the Regional Resource Hospital structure.

Oregon Health Authority calls on hospital laboratories to submit all specimens from patients hospitalized with influenza to the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory for subtyping and lineage determination. Additional information regarding specimen submission is available [here](#).

Additional information regarding influenza activity in Oregon can be found in [Oregon's Flu Bites](#), which is updated every Friday.

Links from above also listed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uIm0KL4tG5fou5OaOrwk0n9SskGPePPR/view>

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le4352.pdf>

https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/LABORATORYSERVICES/COMMUNICABLEDISEASETESTING/Documents/2022-11-18_Influenza%20Season%20Specimen%20Request_Final.pdf

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/COMMUNICABLEDISEASE/DISEASESURVEILLANCEDATA/INFLUENZA/Documents/data/FluBites.pdf>

Unless otherwise noted, feel free to share this HAN notification with:

- **Others within your organization.**
- **Professionals within your health, preparedness, and response affiliations.**

Oregon 24/7 disease reporting: 971-673-1111