



# News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Increase in Flu Activity is Reported**

*State Health Officer urges flu vaccination before peak season*

SACRAMENTO - Dr. Ron Chapman, director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and state health officer, says while we are seeing an increase in flu activity in California it is not an unexpected increase, nor is it too late to get vaccinated against the flu.

“California is seeing an accelerated increase in flu activity over the past few weeks,” said Dr. Chapman. “You can help prevent further spread of the flu by getting a flu shot.”

While influenza activity varies from year to year and is unpredictable, California generally sees an increase in cases in late December or early January and it often peaks in February or March. According to CDPH surveillance indicators, influenza activity in California is beginning to show a steady increase.

“The best defense against the flu is getting vaccinated. This year’s vaccine is an excellent match against this year’s influenza strains,” Dr. Chapman says. “There is no shortage of vaccine in California and it is not too late to get vaccinated. Our flu season may not peak for several more weeks, so I encourage everyone to get vaccinated to protect not only themselves, but those with whom they come into contact.”

Dr. Chapman also notes that in addition to getting vaccinated, it’s important to practice good hand washing and other good health habits. People who are ill should take actions to stop the spread of germs such as:

- While sick, limit contact with others
- cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing
- wash hands thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based rub
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

Those at highest risk - the elderly, pregnant women, infants, or those with other health conditions - who show flu symptoms should contact their physician immediately in order to get the most effective treatment. Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue.

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

