



Media Contact:  
Pam Davenport  
(801) 468-2757  
(801) 209-0986

**For Immediate Release**

June 16, 2009

**New Flu-related Deaths Now Total Six in Salt Lake County**

*Health Department reports additional death Tuesday*

(Salt Lake County) – The Salt Lake Valley Health Department (SLVHD) today is reporting a total of six deaths due to Novel Influenza A (H1N1).

“We know that any death is tragic and painful for loved ones,” says Gary Edwards, Executive Director for SLVHD. “Unfortunately, we also know that additional deaths due to the Novel H1N1 virus are not unexpected.”

State and local health officials will study each of the new fatalities to better understand the nature of the Novel H1N1 virus.

Those who are experiencing flu-like symptoms are urged to contact their personal physicians for advice before seeking medical treatment. While those in good health are developing only mild symptoms of influenza, people who are immune compromised or those who have other chronic, underlying health conditions are at risk of the virus becoming life-threatening (*see page 2 for a list of underlying health conditions and symptoms of severe influenza*).

“As the H1N1 virus continues to spread throughout our community, we must stress the need for anyone exhibiting symptoms of influenza to stay home and not go to work or school, or to religious or other gatherings to avoid spreading the virus to family and friends,” says Edwards. “While these recommendations may sound basic, they are vital to help reduce the spread of this virus, especially to those most at risk of serious illness.” Other recommendations include washing hands frequently, coughing into elbows (not hands) or into a tissue and discarding it.

Last week, Utah’s state and local health departments stopped tallying all H1N1 cases in favor of devoting more resources to the study of the related hospitalizations and deaths, and the severity of the virus. The total number of hospitalizations in Salt Lake County stands at 96, and deaths now total six.

For more information, visit [www.slvhealth.org](http://www.slvhealth.org).

###

## **What are considered severe symptoms of influenza?**

For Adults:

- Difficulty breathing
- Purple or blue discoloration of the lips
- Vomiting and unable to keep liquids down
- Signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing, absence of urination, or in infants, a lack of tears when they cry
- Seizures or uncontrolled convulsions
- Loss of consciousness
- Alteration in thinking

For Children:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms that improve then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

**IF SEVERE SYMPTOMS DEVELOP, CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER. IF THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER IS NOT AVAILABLE, GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM.**

## **Who is at risk of complications of flu?**

The following groups of people who are at greater risk of complications from H1N1 flu:

- Adults and children with certain chronic medical conditions including chronic lung problems such as asthma, heart, liver, blood, nervous system, muscular, or metabolic disorders such as diabetes.
- Pregnant women.
- Children younger than 5 years old (under 12 months are especially vulnerable).
- Adults and children who have immunodeficiency or immuno-suppression, including that caused by medications such as corticosteroids and chemotherapy, or diseases such as HIV/AIDS.
- Children ages 6 months to 18 years who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye syndrome after influenza virus infection.
- Persons 50 years old or older, particularly 65 years or older.
- People who live in settings such as nursing homes, residential schools, and jails.