

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Kerri S. Mabee
Public Information Officer
Riverside University Health System
P: 951.467.7542 | E: k.mabee@ruhealth.org

Public Health Officials Confirm First Flu-Related Death of the Season in Riverside County, Advise Vaccination

RIVERSIDE, CA (Nov. 20, 2025) – Health officials with Riverside University Health System – Public Health (RUHS – PH) are reporting the first influenza-related death of the 2025-26 flu season, while reminding residents that vaccination is one of the best ways to protect against flu and other respiratory viruses.

The individual, who was over 65 and from Western Riverside County, is not believed to have been vaccinated.

“This death is a sad reminder of the dangers that influenza can pose, especially among older adults and those with underlying conditions, and the impact it can then have on families who suffer the loss,” said Riverside County Health Officer Dr. Jennifer Chevinsky. “To protect our loved ones, it is important to make sure those at higher risk don’t delay getting a flu shot.”

[Current data](#), including emergency department statistics, hospitalizations and wastewater testing, show influenza activity is low in Riverside County. Historic trends show flu season could ramp up through the Thanksgiving and winter holiday travel season. Flu season typically runs from October to April.

Influenza cases can be serious for individuals considered at-risk for severe disease, including adults over 65 years, children under 5 years, pregnant women and those who are immunocompromised or have certain health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease.

Even for those who are otherwise healthy, flu can lead to extended illness with uncomfortable symptoms such as cough, fever, sore throat, stuffy nose, muscle aches and fatigue. Flu spread can also lead to missed school days, lost work wages and out of pocket medical costs.

Vaccines can reduce complications, minimize life interruptions and offer protection for all.

“Now is the perfect time to protect against influenza. Vaccination is safe and flu vaccines are widely available. It is a simple step we all can do to protect those we care about as the holiday season ramps up,” Dr. Chevinsky said.

According to the [California Department of Public Health](#), everyone over 6 months of age should receive the flu vaccine each year.

In addition to vaccination, the public is encouraged to take the following steps to protect themselves and others against flu, COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses:

- Wash hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Stay home from work or school when sick.

- Consider indoor masking in crowded places.
- Improve ventilation by opening windows or moving events outdoors.
- Disinfect frequently used surfaces.

For those at higher risk who do get sick, get tested and talk with your healthcare provider about treatment options.

Flu vaccines can be accessed at your healthcare provider's office and many local pharmacies. Public Health vaccination clinics can be found [here](#).

View the county's respiratory illness dashboard: [Respiratory Viruses | Riverside University Health System \(ruhealth.org\)](#).

For more information, visit [RUHealth.org/ruhs-public-health](#).

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About Riverside University Health System – Public Health

Riverside University Health System – Public Health (RUHS - PH) serves as Riverside County's public health department. RUHS-PH offers a range of services and programs to promote and protect the health of all county residents and visitors in service of the well-being of the community. RUHS includes the 439-bed Medical Center in Moreno Valley, Calif., 14 Community Health Centers across Riverside County, and Behavioral Health, which provides emergency and inpatient psychiatric care. Visit www.ruhealth.org to learn more..