

Date: May 5, 2009

Time: 2:00 p.m.

H1N1 cases confirmed in Washington State

Nine cases of H1N1 flu have been confirmed in Washington State by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These cases have been in King, Snohomish, and Spokane counties. No confirmed or probable cases of H1N1 flu have been identified in Kittitas County.

So far, the H1N1 flu virus appears to act very similarly to existing seasonal flu viruses. However, **if you are ill with flu symptoms do not go to school or work, or attend public gatherings such as church or sporting events.** Flu symptoms include fever of 100 °F or more, sore throat, cough, runny nose, body aches, vomiting, or diarrhea. Each year there are about 200,000 hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths in the United States due to flu. By staying home when you are sick, you can do your part to minimize these numbers.

Kittitas County Public Health Department recommends that families have plans in place in case someone in the family is ill and needs to stay home from work or school. Current guidelines for school exclusion state that children who are ill with two or more flu symptoms must stay home for a minimum of seven days.

Public Health response in Kittitas County to the novel H1N1 flu outbreak has included daily discussions with health care partners including Central Washington University, Kittitas Valley Community Hospital, Kittitas Valley Fire and Rescue, Red Cross, and representatives from interested health care facilities and schools. Issues discussed include things such as school closure guidelines, antiviral medication use, H1N1 testing recommendations for health care facilities, and personal protective equipment use by health care providers.

For more information about H1N1 flu visit the Kittitas County Public Health Department website, www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/h1n1.asp, or call the Kittitas County Public Health Department H1N1 Flu Hotline at (509) 962-7696.

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For the most up-to-date case counts visit:

Washington State – <http://www.doh.wa.gov/swineflu/CountyMapNumbers.htm>

United States – <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>

Worldwide – <http://www.who.int>