



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**This is an official
MS Health Alert Network (HAN) Advisory**

MESSAGE ID: MSHAN-20170907-00134-ADV (Health Advisory)

RECIPIENTS: All Physicians, Hospitals, ERs, ICPs, NPs, and Healthcare Providers -
Statewide

DATE: Thursday, September 07, 2017

SUBJECT: Early Reports of Influenza Activity in Mississippi—Vaccine
Recommendations

Key Messages

- MSDH has received earlier than expected reports of influenza activity in the state;
- Providers are reminded to offer influenza vaccination during all routine visits and hospitalizations **as soon as vaccine is available**;
- Vaccine is recommended for all persons \geq 6 months of age, especially healthcare workers and those at higher risk of severe outcomes;
- Vaccination of all healthcare workers is recommended;
- See the “Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices — United States, 2017–18 Influenza Season” from the CDC available at <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/rr/rr6602a1.htm>
- To report outbreaks or if you have questions please call the MSDH Office of Epidemiology at 601-576-7725 (601-576-7400 after hours, holidays, and weekends).

The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) has received earlier than expected reports of influenza in the state. While overall influenza activity has not increased in Mississippi so far, localized increases in a college setting and an outbreak in a residential facility setting were reported to MSDH in late August and early September. Testing at the Mississippi Public Health Laboratory confirms influenza A H3N2 in these settings; further antigenic characterization is underway at the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention to determine if the strain is a match to the current 2017-2018 vaccine components.



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While flu can occur year round, this early activity is unusual; reports of influenza outbreaks and localized increases typically occur later in the season in Mississippi. The start of the flu season each year can be variable, but usually activity begins to increase in October and continues through March, with peak activity between December and February. MSDH monitors influenza activity year round through a network of sentinel providers located in outpatient clinics, hospital emergency departments and student health centers. Each week the providers report the number of patient visits consistent with an influenza-like illness (ILI), providing MSDH with an estimate of the magnitude and spread of influenza in the state. Suspected outbreaks of influenza are reportable as well.

With the isolated reports of influenza activity this early in the state, MSDH recommends the following guidance for influenza vaccination:

- Providers should offer influenza vaccination during all routine health care visits and hospitalizations **as soon as vaccine is available**;
- Routine vaccination is recommended for all persons aged ≥ 6 months, especially persons at highest risk of severe outcomes (children < 5 years of age, persons ≥ 50 years of age, pregnant women or women planning to become pregnant, residents of long-term residential facilities, and those with chronic underlying illness and obesity, among others);
- **Vaccination of healthcare workers should be a priority for all healthcare facilities**;
- Vaccination should occur before the onset of community wide increases in flu activity and should continue throughout the season as long as influenza viruses are in circulation.

To report outbreaks or if you have questions please call the MSDH Office of Epidemiology at 601-576-7725 (601-576-7400 after hours, holidays, and weekends).

Regards,

Paul Byers, MD
State Epidemiologist



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Alerting Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency:	Mississippi State Department of Health
Alerting Program:	MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)
Message Identifier:	MSHAN-20170907-00134-ADV
Program (HAN) Type:	Health Advisory
Status (Type):	Actual ()
Message Type:	Alert
Reference:	MSHAN-00134
Severity:	Unknown
Acknowledgement:	No
Sensitive:	Not Sensitive
Message Expiration:	Undetermined
Urgency:	Undetermined
Delivery Time:	600 minutes

Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency:	A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.
Alerting Program:	The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.
Message Identifier:	A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT (ALT=Health Alert , ADV=Health Advisory , UPD=Health Update , MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service)).
Program (HAN) Type:	Categories of Health Alert Messages.
Health Alert:	Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
Health Advisory:	Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
Health Update:	Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.
Health Info Service:	Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.
Status (Type):	
Actual:	Communication or alert refers to a live event
Exercise:	Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
Test:	Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded



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Message Type:

Alert: Indicates an original Alert
Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

Reference: For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

Severity:

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe: Significant threat to life or property
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

Acknowledgement: Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

Sensitive:

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

Message Expiration: Undetermined.

Urgency: Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

Delivery Time: Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).