

Mission:  
To protect, promote & improve the health  
of all people in Florida through integrated  
state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott  
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
November 24, 2014

**Contact:** Communications Office  
(850) 245-4111

## **HEALTH OFFICIALS ANNOUNCE TWO PEDIATRIC FLU ASSOCIATED DEATHS**

**TALLAHASSEE** — The Florida Department of Health has received notification of two influenza associated pediatric deaths in Orange and Pasco Counties. While most cases of flu are mild, there are exceptions. Pre-existing health conditions often play a role in how individuals react to the flu.

"Our hearts go out to the family and friends of these children," said Deputy Secretary for Health and Deputy State Health Officer for Children's Medical Services Dr. Celeste Philip. "Getting the flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and others from the flu. You can help prevent the spread of flu or other viruses by staying home from work or school when you are sick, covering your coughs and sneezes and washing your hands frequently."

The majority of deaths from flu in the United States each year occur in persons with underlying chronic health conditions. Pregnant women, young children, cancer patients, people with asthma, diabetes, suppressed immune systems, heart disease and kidney disease need to pay particular attention to personal hygiene, avoid close contact to infected persons and consult with their healthcare provider regarding the influenza vaccine.

Additional flu prevention steps include washing your hands often, keeping your hands away from your face and covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing and coughing. Symptoms of the flu include headache, fever, severe cough, sore throat, runny nose or body aches. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, see your primary care provider immediately for guidance on treatment.

In Florida, the most common influenza subtype detected at the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories (BPHL) in recent weeks has been influenza A (H3). Each year scientists try to match the viruses in the vaccine to those most likely to cause the flu that particular year. Currently available vaccine formulations protect against all strains of influenza that have been identified by the BPHL as circulating in Florida this season.

It is important for you and your family members to get a flu vaccine every year. Flu vaccines are offered in many locations, including doctor's offices, clinics, health departments, retail stores, pharmacies, health centers and by many employers and schools. Check with your physician, or visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/prevention-safety-and-wellness/flu-prevention/locate-a-flu-shot.html> to search for a location to receive a flu vaccine.

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.floridahealth.gov](http://www.floridahealth.gov).

Florida Department of Health  
Office of Communications  
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin A-04 • Tallahassee, FL 32399-1705  
PHONE: 850/245-4111 • FAX 850/488-6495

[www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov)  
TWITTER: HealthyFLA  
FACEBOOK: FLDepartmentofHealth  
YOUTUBE: fldoh  
FLICKR: HealthyFla  
PINTEREST: HealthyFla

###