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Health Officials Report First Flu-Related Death in Riverside County

MORENO VALLEY, CA (Oct. 18, 2024) – An elderly man from eastern Coachella Valley has been reported as the first individual in Riverside County to die from flu-associated causes for the 2024-25 flu season, which typically runs from October to April.

The death earlier this month underscores the importance of taking protective measures as flu season gets underway, said Riverside County Public Health Officer Dr. Geoffrey Leung.

“Now is the time to be aware of the dangers that influenza can present to our communities and do what we can to reduce the risk of getting or spreading the flu to others,” he said.

Leung notes one of the most important layers of protection against influenza is to get vaccinated, adding that everyone over 6 months of age should receive the flu vaccine.

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
- Disinfect frequently used surfaces

Influenza cases can be serious for individuals considered at-risk for severe disease, such as those who are immunocompromised, elderly, young (e.g., children under 5 years), pregnant, or have certain health conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease) resulting in hospitalization and, in some cases, death. 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

“Vaccination is safe, simple and widely available. I urge all residents to take this vital step in protecting themselves and staying healthy this winter,” Leung said.

Vaccination clinics can be found [here](#).

For more information about respiratory illnesses and vaccines, visit [RUHealth.org](https://ruhealth.org) to view the county's respiratory illness dashboard, click [Respiratory Viruses | Riverside University Health System \(ruhealth.org\)](#).

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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 [RUHealth.org](https://ruhealth.org) to learn more.