

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 1/24/2019

TO: Grant County Media

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

Heather Massart, MPHc, Public Information Officer
509-766-7960 ext. 16

2018-2019 Flu Season Update.

GCHD continues to receive reports of lab confirmed influenza with one known influenza-associated death.

GRANT COUNTY, WA— **An update for the Grant County community on the 2018-2019 flu season.** GCHD is continuing to receive reports of flu cases, with about 40% of the cases in the school age population. GCHD is still encouraging all residents **6 months and older to get their flu shot.** Flu activity typically increases in the winter months when people spend more time indoors around each other. People who haven't been vaccinated against the flu still have time to get the vaccine before the season reaches its peak.

Grant County Statistics for 2018-2019 Influenza Season:

As a disclaimer, flu reporting is not mandated unless associated with a death. GCHD has reporting agreements several healthcare entities to monitor influenza activity across Grant County. Thus far in Grant County we have had:

- **1 lab-confirmed influenza death (A).**
- **342 Influenza A cases** reported to date for the season with trends recently flattening or decreasing.
- **3 Influenza B cases** reported to date. This is the time of year that we usually start seeing an increase in "B".

Washington State Influenza update (Week 02: January 6, 2019-January 12, 2019):

- **17 lab-confirmed influenza deaths** have been reported for the 2018-2019 season to date.
- **12 influenza-like illness outbreaks in LTC facilities** have been reported to date.
- Influenza A and influenza B were reported during week 2.

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu and have respiratory symptoms without a fever. People with the flu can make others sick one day before symptoms appear and up to five days after symptoms begin. If sick and seeking medical care, wear a facemask, most healthcare facilities provide masks at the front door. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. And wash your hands often to keep from spreading flu to others.

Are you at increased risk?

Flu can make existing health conditions worse and can lead to hospitalization and death.

- People with asthma, diabetes, chronic lung disease, heart disease, and people over 65 years old are among those who are at a higher risk for developing flu-related complications.
- Infants are at an increased risk for flu, caregivers who are sick should wear a mask when caring for an infant.



- Pregnant women are at serious risk of flu complications. The flu shot is safe and recommended at any stage of pregnancy. When expectant moms get a flu shot it protects the baby inside too — for up to six months after birth. Get a flu shot to protect you and your growing family.

There are flu vaccines available in various locations, including health care provider offices and pharmacies. People can also find a clinic by calling the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588 or GCHD at 509-766-7960.

Consultation

Kari Hitzroth, Public Health Nurse

509-766-7960 ext. 13 or khitzroth@granthealth.org

###
