



## Riverside County Public Health

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## Riverside County health officials confirm first flu-related death of the year

A 33-year-old man from Western Riverside County who recently died has tested positive for influenza. Health officials said it is the first influenza-related death of the flu season in Riverside County.

The man tested positive and died last week after being hospitalized, according to Dr. Cameron Kaiser, Riverside County public health officer. Officials say the patient had other underlying health issues that contributed to his death.

Officials have not determined whether the patient had received a flu vaccine. There were 26 flu-related deaths in Riverside County in 2014.

Riverside County has seen increases in instances of influenza-like illness. Statewide, flu activity has increased recently.

Officials emphasize there are ways to reduce the chances of catching the flu. Influenza vaccination is important and the most effective protection against flu viruses, Kaiser said. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended that all persons 6 months of age and older receive a flu vaccination each year.

"Even in years where the flu vaccine is less good of a match, it's still much better protection than going without it," Kaiser said. "And it's not too late this season to get one."

Effective hand washing and proper covering of coughs and sneezing also help to prevent the spread of flu. Individuals, who are ill with cough and fever, are encouraged not to go work or school to limit exposure of co-workers and classmates.