



YUMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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New H1N1 Flu

Formerly known as the Swine Flu

Bulletin No. 5

To: All YCSO Personnel
From: Major Leon Wilmot
Date: May 6, 2009
Message: 3 Messages Attached for your Use

Kevin Tunnel, Channel 77, dated May 5, 2009

Yuma Union High School District, dated May 4, 2009

Yuma County Office of Emergency Management, dated May 6, 2009

Kevin Tunnel, Channel 77

YUMA COUNTY, Ariz. The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and Yuma County Public Health Services District learned today that The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed 10 additional cases, bringing the total number of cases to 11 detected of New H1N1 virus in Yuma County. All 11 cases in Yuma County have fully recovered. Yuma County officials will continue to update the public as information about the flu virus becomes available.

"I want to thank every resident in Yuma County for the way they are handling themselves during this flu virus", said Becky Brooks, Director of the Yuma County Public Health District. Traffic at the local hospital has dropped off considerably as residents have begun to understand that it is important to stay at home and take care of themselves if they, or their loved ones, display the symptoms.

We will continue to release numbers of confirmed cases in Yuma County, but we are now conducting ourselves as if this is a regular flu season. The conduct of the New H1N1 is presenting itself as a regular flu virus.

The Yuma County Public Health District has also adopted the new CDC guidelines for school closures:

School closure is not advised for a suspected or confirmed case of novel influenza A (H1N1) and, in general, is not advised unless there is a magnitude of faculty or student absenteeism that interferes with the schools ability to function.

Schools that were closed based on previous interim CDC guidance related to this outbreak may reopen. CDC recommends that schools focus on early identification of ill students and staff, staying home when ill, and good cough and hand hygiene etiquette as the primary strategy to reduce spread of influenza in schools.

Parents and guardians should monitor their school-aged children, and faculty and staff should self-monitor every morning for symptoms of influenza-like illness.

As we have been saying all along, if you are feeling sick and under normal circumstances you would not have gone to the emergency room, then you should not go now, explained Brooks. If you are ill and your symptoms become unmanageable at home or you have a need for urgent medical treatment contact your primary care physician for guidance.

The New H1N1 virus strain currently being monitored in the United States is a new type of virus never seen in people until recently. This influenza strain has the same symptoms as seasonal influenza: sudden onset of high fever, runny nose, body aches and exhaustion. Some people with this strain have nausea and diarrhea.

Yuma Union High School District

For Immediate Release

Open Letter to Parents of Students in the YUHSD

Yuma, Arizona

May 4, 2009

Dear Parents,

You've heard a lot in the past week or so about the so-called "swine flu", now known as the New H1N1 virus. There was a lot of conflicting information out there for the last 10 days about the virus. In cooperation with the Yuma County Health Department, I am communicating to you today to share with you the impact of this new flu virus on your children and their school, and to let you know what you can do to help.

First, I want you to know that I take the health of the communities in our district and the health of our students very seriously. For that reason, we studied and communicated the CDC's recommendations for prevention last week. In the days since, we have been monitoring the County Health Department and the CDC to make sure we were doing the right thing. With their support we have carefully considered what the appropriate response to potential cases in our community would be by the Yuma Union High School District.

Current data shows that this new strain of flu is behaving just like the seasonal flu we all know. It does not seem to make people any sicker than the regular flu. It appears that the virus is already broadly spread around our geographical area.

Therefore, a handful of individual school dismissals will not help to slow its spread. Closing all schools for a time might help, but the disease does not seem severe enough to warrant the disruption to your lives, to your child's education and to the community that would result. After all, we don't close schools every year for regular, seasonal flu.

Therefore, I have decided not to recommend any high school closures *unless* we are advised by health agencies that they are seeing a significant cluster of cases in a school. I am also not recommending cancellation or avoidance of any school event like a prom, graduation, athletics or field trips. We will be keeping a close eye on this evolving situation, on what the health experts are recommending. If the County Health Department or the CDC see any indications that this flu is becoming more dangerous, or if we see a particular school with a significant cluster of cases, I will take whatever steps necessary in order to stop the spread, including but not limited to dismissing school(s).

Basically, the Yuma County Public Health Department is handling this new flu outbreak in the same way we handle any flu outbreak, only more diligently. Also, our student absences are not higher than they were three weeks ago and are not different in percentage from last year at this time.

Our schools have been working with students to promote proper hygiene and we will continue to monitor absenteeism rates. Importantly, your school will stringently enforce that any sick child remain home from school. Any student with influenza-like illness (a moderate to high fever, body aches, fatigue, cough, often a sore throat, plus other symptoms sometimes) should stay home until at least 7 days after his or her symptoms started or at least 24 hours without fever, *whichever is longer*.

Please help by reviewing with your children how to protect themselves and others from the flu and many other infectious diseases. I am asking you to take 5 minutes today and talk to your children about three things:

Proper hand-washing practices; scrubbing for 20 seconds may seem like a long time, but it is the estimated time it takes to eliminate bacteria.

Coughing and Sneezing into a tissue or sleeve- not in hands; When droplets of spit from a cough or sneeze land on your kids hands, any potential virus can easily be passed on to you or to their classmates. (Don't forget to wash hands after using a tissue.)

Keeping hands away from eyes, noses and mouths; Viruses such as flu travel into the body through places like our eyes, nose and mouth. If you remind your children to keep their hands away from these places, there is less of a chance of your child picking up an illness.

Above all, do NOT send your child to school if they are sick.

Lastly, I want to assure you that we are not taking this lightly, and we don't want you to, either. All flu can be a serious disease for some people. Regular, seasonal flu and its complications kills an average of 36,000 people each year in this country. Thus, this new flu will also cause serious illness and deaths. You will no doubt hear about some of these as the epidemic progresses.

The number of samples sent to the CDC for testing in the past week shows that there is still plenty of seasonal flu in our community. Any strain of flu can be dangerous to persons with underlying chronic illnesses like asthma, diabetes, heart conditions, and so forth, which put them at increased risk for complications of the flu. Those of you with children who have such conditions have probably been told this by your health care provider and have been urged to get flu shots each fall. Unfortunately, we do not yet have a vaccine against this new flu strain, but all of the above actions should help

to protect your children. If you have further concerns, you may wish to consult with your health care provider for additional advice.

If you have additional concerns, I urge you to seek information from reputable sources such as the Yuma County Health Department or the Center for Disease Control websites.

We are all in this together. It is not often that our students have so much control over the outcome of a worldwide situation. However, with your help, your child can make all the difference. Thank you in advance for doing your part.

Stay healthy,

Toni Badone
Superintendent

Yuma County Office of Emergency Management

Throughout Arizona, there are Forty-nine (49) confirmed cases for H1N1:

LaPaz	1	Maricopa	20
Yuma	11	Pima	10
Pinal	5	Santa Cruz	2

At last report there are 403 cases of H1N1 throughout the U.S. and, another patient has died in Texas as a result of the H1N1 virus.

The following is an excerpt from the letter printed above: YUHSD Superintendent Toni Badone drafted a letter to school parents indicating her intent not to close schools as a result of the H1N1 virus. "I have decided not to recommend any high school closures unless we are advised by health agencies that they are seeing a significant cluster of cases in a school" Badone stated in her letter.