



# SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

GAIL NEWEL, MD, MPH  
HEALTH OFFICER

JAMES A. RYDINGSWORD  
AGENCY DIRECTOR

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES  
*Healthy People in Healthy Communities*

## Two Deaths of San Benito County Residents from Influenza Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 11, 2018

CONTACT:

Sam Perez, Public Information Officer

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“We regretfully announce the deaths of two San Benito County residents associated with influenza virus infection,” stated Dr. Gail Newel, Health Officer.

One of these individuals was an adult under the age of 65 years, and the other was over 65. Both had other medical conditions possibly increasing the risk of severe complications from the flu. Although the vaccination status for these residents are unknown State health officials report “of the 27 influenza-associated deaths and 85 influenza-associated intensive care unit admissions in persons <65 years of age for whom data were available, approximately 95% had at least one underlying medical condition and two thirds were unvaccinated”.

Disease surveillance data indicate that influenza activity is increasing in San Benito County and throughout the State. People at highest risk for severe complications from influenza infection include adults 65 years of age and older, children younger than 5 years old, pregnant women, and those with certain medical conditions like asthma, heart disease, and weakened immune systems.

“I emphasize the importance of getting the flu shot,” said Dr. Newel. “It is not too late to get vaccinated—we encourage everyone six months of age and older to get vaccinated *as soon as possible every flu season.*” **Public Health Services provides free flu shots.**

Get the flu vaccine locally at

- Your healthcare provider (covered by insurance without deductible or copay)
- Any pharmacy (covered by insurance without deductible or copay)
- Public Health Services office at 439 Fourth Street in Hollister. We offer free flu vaccine on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. No appointments are necessary—just walk in.

Public health officials also advise you to take the following steps to protect yourself and your loved ones from the flu, as well as from other respiratory illnesses:

- Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue.
- If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Stay home when you or family members are sick—and stay home until you have been symptom-free for *at least* 24 hours.

**PUBLIC HEALTH  
SERVICES**  
439 Fourth Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-637-5367

**MEDICAL THERAPY  
UNIT**  
761 South Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-637-1989

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH SERVICES**  
351 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C-1  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-636-4035

**HEALTH EDUCATION  
PROGRAMS**  
439 Fourth Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-637-5367

For more information please call Public Health Services at (831) 637-5367, go to San Benito Public Health Services website <http://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/>, or visit <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Influenza.aspx>.

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