



## News Release

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Novel H1N1 Continues to Spread Throughout State**

**(Salt Lake City)** – As the Novel H1N1 influenza virus continues to spread throughout Utah, with some patients suffering severe illness, public health officials are stressing the importance of limiting the spread of the disease. The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) today reported a total of 489 confirmed cases in the state, 35 individuals have required hospitalization, and two have died.

The majority of individuals infected with the virus have recovered from their illness without complications and without the need for medical attention. However, some individuals are at greater risk of suffering from severe illness. Public health officials, physicians, and the general public should take precautions to prevent these individuals from becoming infected.

“Pregnant women, children under the age of five, and people with pre-existing chronic medical conditions seem to be in the ‘high-risk’ category,” said State Epidemiologist Dr. Robert Rolfs. “Most of the hospitalized cases, and both of the deaths, fall into these high-risk categories; it’s important for these people to seek medical care if they are ill with an influenza-like illness. And for anyone else who may be sick, and who lives with someone who is high-risk, it’s important that they take steps not to infect others.”

Dr. Rolfs also said physicians who see high-risk patients who are exhibiting symptoms of influenza should not wait for laboratory confirmation of Novel H1N1 influenza to begin antiviral treatment. At this time, most people with influenza have the Novel H1N1 virus. Symptoms of the virus are similar to seasonal influenza and include a fever of 101 or

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higher, cough, sore throat, headache, body aches, extreme fatigue, and possible nausea and vomiting.

Everyone can help limit the spread of disease by practicing basic good hygiene—washing your hands frequently, sneezing into your elbow, blowing your nose into a tissue and discarding it properly.

And if you or your children become ill, stay home from work and keep your children home from school, parties, and other group activities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends staying home for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer.

This week, the World Health Organization reported 19,273 cases, including 117 deaths, in 66 countries throughout the world. Nationwide, CDC reported 11,054 cases, including 17 deaths, in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

“The H1N1 epidemic continues to unfold and remains unpredictable,” said UDOH Executive Director Dr. David Sundwall. “It is by no means over, so public health at all levels will remain very vigilant in tracking cases and monitoring those patients who are most seriously ill with the virus,” he added.

Sundwall also emphasized that health officials are watching to see if the virus changes and becomes more virulent by the time the fall influenza season arrives.

For updated information on Novel H1N1 influenza visit [www.health.utah.gov/h1n1](http://www.health.utah.gov/h1n1).

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*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*