



Cochise County
Health and Social Services

NEWS RELEASE

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First Child Flu Death This Year in Cochise County

Public Health urges residents to help fight the flu for themselves and their children

BISBEE, Ariz. (12/02/2022) – The first child Influenza (flu) death in 2022 has been confirmed in Cochise County. The last child flu death here was in 2010. This heartbreaking news is a reminder that flu illness is more dangerous than the common cold for children. Every flu season, thousands of children younger than five are hospitalized from flu complications. Flu is also spreading at the same time as other respiratory illnesses, including Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and COVID-19. You have the power to help protect your loved ones this flu season.

What is flu?

Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. Flu is different from a cold, and usually comes on suddenly. Each year, millions of children get sick with seasonal flu; thousands of children are hospitalized, and some children die from flu.

What are the signs and symptoms of flu?

Cold and flu symptoms are similar, symptoms specific to the flu can include fever or feeling feverish, chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, and fatigue. It is important to note that not everyone with flu will experience fever.

What can I do if my child is sick?

Talk to your doctor early if you are worried about your child's illness. If your child is 5 years or older and does not have a long-term health problem and gets flu symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, consult your doctor as needed. Children younger than 5 years of age – especially those younger than 2 years – and children with certain long-term health problems (including asthma, diabetes and disorders of the brain or nervous system), are at high risk of serious flu complications. Call your doctor or take your child to the doctor right away if they develop flu symptoms.

Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids throughout the day. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends they stay home at least 24 hours after their fever is gone and their symptoms have improved or resolved, the fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medications. A fever is defined as 100° F (37.8° C) or higher. Antiviral drugs are recommended for people who are very sick or are at high risk of serious flu complications, please consult with your medical provider for additional information.

What if my child is very sick?

If your child is experiencing the following emergency warning signs, you should go to the emergency room:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish lips or face
- Ribs pulling in with each breath
- Chest pain
- Nasal flaring – opening of the nose spreading open while breathing in
- Grunting sounds while breathing out
- Severe muscle pain (child refuses to walk)
- Dehydration (no urine for 8 hours, dry mouth, no tears)
- Not alert or interacting when awake
- Seizures
- Fever above 104° F
- In children less than 12 weeks, any fever
- Fever or cough that improve but then return or worsen
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions

This list is not all-inclusive, please consult your medical provider for any other symptom that is severe or concerning.

Protect your child

The first and best way to protect against the flu is to get a yearly flu vaccine for yourself and your child. Flu vaccinations are recommended for everyone 6 months and older, every year. All Cochise County Health & Social Services clinics offer free flu vaccines. Please call the clinic nearest to you to schedule your appointment, you can also find additional information and locations on our webpage ([link](#)).

In addition to getting a flu vaccine, you and your child should take everyday actions to help prevent the spread of germs. Stay away from people who are sick, cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often with soap and water, and do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.

For more information about the flu please visit the CDC webpage ([link](#)). For more information about Arizona's weekly Influenza statistics please visit Arizona Department of Health Services ([link](#)).

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About Cochise County

Cochise County provides regional leadership and effective, high-quality services with personal and professional integrity. Located in the southeast corner of Arizona, Cochise County has natural beauty, world-famous history, and fascinating culture. Covering 6,219 square miles, and with a population of approximately 130,000 people, the County provides vital services to the unincorporated areas of the region. It is home to a diverse range of incorporated cities, including Sierra Vista, Bisbee, Benson, Douglas, Tombstone, Willcox, and Huachuca City. For more information, visit www.cochise.az.gov, facebook.com/CochiseCountyAZ, or twitter.com/CochiseCountyAZ. Public Programs...Personal Service.