



Media Release

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Yakima County Reports First Flu Death of Season

Yakima, WA- The first flu death of the season in Yakima County has been reported to the Yakima Health District. The individual was between the ages of 30-49. Flu activity in Yakima County is following the previous year's trend. Based on the total number of flu tests conducted during the week of November 5, 2023 to November 11, 2023, 8.6% were positive. Compared to one month prior (the week of October 1, 2023- October 7, 2023) when 1.0% of the rapid tests were positive.

The Yakima Health District urges individuals to follow public health recommendations and stay up to date on vaccinations to help reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses this fall:

- Receive the updated COVID-19 vaccine, flu vaccine, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine if eligible.
 - Individuals can visit www.YakimaVaccines.org for more information.
- Stay home if you are sick and if individuals experience COVID-19 symptoms, get tested.
 - Beginning November 20, every household in the United States can again place an order to receive four more free COVID-19 rapid tests delivered to their home. Individuals can place their order at www.COVIDTests.gov.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Individuals are encouraged to speak to their primary care provider about vaccination for themselves and their family to make informed decision-making. For those that do not have a primary care provider, please call 2-1-1.

Flu Vaccine

Everyone six months of age and older are recommended to get an annual flu vaccine. Young children, pregnant women, [those with underlying health conditions](#), and people aged 65 and older are at high risk for flu-related complications. The flu is a highly contagious disease that can cause

mild to severe illness, and lead to hospitalization and death- even in healthy, young people. Getting a flu vaccine reduces individual's risk of getting the flu, and it can be safely given at the same time as a COVID-19 vaccine.

COVID-19 Vaccine

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended the updated COVID-19 vaccine for everyone ages 6 months and older to protect against the newer COVID-19 variants, regardless of previous vaccination. Individuals can find a list of upcoming community COVID-19 vaccine clinics and a list of local clinics and pharmacies offering COVID-19, flu, and RSV vaccines at www.YakimaVaccines.org.

RSV Vaccine

RSV is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious. Infants and older adults are more likely to develop severe RSV and need hospitalization. RSV vaccines are available to provide protection:

- Adults 60 years old and over
 - Adults 60 years and older may receive a single dose of the RSV vaccine.
- Pregnant people
 - 1 dose of maternal RSV vaccine during weeks 32 through 36 of pregnancy, administered immediately before or during RSV season.

Individuals with questions about the RSV vaccine for themselves should speak to their healthcare provider.

Quote

“As we approach the holiday season, we encourage all of you to remain up to date on the vaccinations that protect against respiratory infections. The vaccines for flu, RSV and COVID-19 will decrease the chance of severe illness and hospitalization. As gatherings occur, remember to follow public health recommendations, such as washing your hands frequently and staying home if you are sick.” –Dr. Neil Barg, Health Officer, Yakima Health District

Additional Information:

www.YakimaVaccines.org

www.YakimaTesting.org

www.COVIDTests.gov

[CDC: Flu](#)

[WA DOH: Are you at high risk for flu?](#)

[CDC: RSV](#)

[CDC: RSV Immunizations](#)

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