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NEWS RELEASE

Second Flu-Related Death this Season Reported in El Paso

Health officials continue to promote awareness and prevention

EL PASO, Texas – An El Paso woman is the second flu-related death in the area so far this season. City of El Paso Department of Public Health officials say the woman was in her mid-20s and had no known underlying medical conditions. Additionally, epidemiologist investigating the case say the woman had been vaccinated against the influenza virus.

“As public health professionals, this is very difficult news to deal with, as is any loss of life,” said Fernando Gonzalez, Lead Epidemiologist. “The only thing that could make this even worse is if our community assumes that this means the vaccine is ineffective, when we know that this is not the case.”

As of the second week of January, the number of flu cases in El Paso is 2,946. That is compared to 3,377 at the same time last season.

In addition to the flu vaccine, public health officials urge the public to practice the four C’s in order to help reduce the incidence of infection. They are:

1. **CLEAN** - Wash your hands often. Scrub your hands for at least 30 seconds with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
2. **COVER** – Cover your cough. Use a tissue to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Don’t have a tissue? The crook of your elbow will do.
3. **CONTAIN** – Contain germs by steering clear of others who are sick. If you do get sick, stay home until you’re well again, so you don’t spread more germs.
4. **CALL** – Call or see your doctor if you or your child has a fever greater than 100 degrees.

Additional information is available at www.EPHealth.com or www.EPSalud.com under the flu tab.

There were 21 flu-related deaths during last year’s flu season.

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