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INFLUENZA UPDATE FOR FEB. 1, 2005

ATLANTA (GA) – The Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) reports that the state public health laboratory has confirmed three more cases of influenza (Flu) this season. As of today, the total number of confirmed Influenza cases in Georgia this season is five. Of the three new cases, two are in residents of the Northeast Georgia area – one child and one adult. The third case was in a child from the West Georgia area.

The Level of influenza-like-illness in Georgia: Sporadic

No activity Sporadic Local Regional Widespread

For a breakdown of national activity, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity.htm>.

Vaccine supply

In December 2004, local health departments across the state received nearly 100,000 doses of influenza vaccine from Aventis Pasteur. To date, Georgia's public and private healthcare providers have received approximately 1.3 million doses of influenza vaccine, and most health departments currently have vaccine available for members of the priority groups.

Vaccine eligibility

State health officials will follow the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and encourage all providers with influenza vaccine to open eligibility to all individuals over age 50, household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of persons in high-risk groups.

Quote

“Influenza is unpredictable and it is possible that we could see an increase in flu activity throughout the state before the end of the season,” explained Stuart Brown, M.D., director of the DHR Division of Public Health. “Flu vaccine is still available and we ask that anyone who is eligible contact their local health department or healthcare provider to get vaccinated.”