



## Public Health

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### **Health officials report first flu-associated death of the 2019-20 season in Riverside County**

A 4-year-old child from Perris who recently died tested positive for influenza, health officials said today. The child had underlying health issues and passed away at a medical facility outside of the county.

It is considered the first pediatric flu-associated death of this flu season (2019-20) in Riverside County. There were nine flu-associated deaths in 2018-2019, and 23 during 2017-2018.

According to Dr. Cameron Kaiser, Riverside County Public Health Officer, the child's death is a tragic reminder of how deadly influenza can be.

"We should never forget that the flu still kills," Kaiser said. "I always recommend people get their flu shots every year, but a death so early in the flu season suggests this year may be worse than usual. Our hearts go out to the family and loved ones who are grieving."

It is not too early to get a flu shot, Kaiser said, adding that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend all persons 6 months of age and older receive a flu vaccination each year, and many providers have this year's shot already in stock. Children 8 years old and under who haven't received at least two flu shots in prior seasons may need two shots to be fully protected; consult your primary care provider.

Kaiser also recommends frequent hand washing and avoiding getting close to people who are sick as ways to avoid the flu. If you or your child are sick, stay home from work and school.

There were nine influenza-associated deaths during the 2018-2019 season in Riverside County.

For more information on where flu shots are being offered throughout Riverside County, [www.rivcoimm.org](http://www.rivcoimm.org)

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