

**Oct. 7, 2009**

**Media Contact:** Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; 941-302-1058;  
[dianne\\_shipley@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:dianne_shipley@doh.state.fl.us);

Crystal Pruitt, 941-861-5900; 941-650-0695; [cpruitt@scgov.net](mailto:cpruitt@scgov.net)

**MEDIA NOTE:** To safeguard patient privacy, the Sarasota County Health Department does not report on the clinical details of individual cases. All patient information reported to the Sarasota County Health Department is pursuant to Section 381.0031 F.S. and are considered confidential medical records that are exempt from the public records law.

## Fourth flu death confirmed as H1N1 (swine) flu in Sarasota County

The Sarasota County Health Department has received laboratory confirmation of a fourth H1N1 (Swine) flu-related death. This death was in a 10-month old girl. "While the majority of people who get the flu will fully recover, every death is tragic, especially in an infant, and this is a sobering reminder that influenza is a serious disease and it can be fatal. Our condolences go out to the family," said William Heymann, M.D., F.A.C.E.P., medical executive director for the Sarasota County Health Department.

Since influenza activity is widespread in our community, everyone is urged to take these precautionary actions daily, especially until the H1N1 (swine) flu vaccine is available in our community:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Wash hands for 20 seconds using soap and water especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with people who are coughing or otherwise appear ill.

Children under age five are especially at risk for complications from the H1N1 (swine) flu. In children, emergency warning signs that need immediate medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting

- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

Parents of young children are also encouraged to talk with their pediatrician about the H1N1 (swine) flu vaccination which will begin to be available in our community by early next week.

Stay healthy, stay informed, visit [www.sarasotahealth.org](http://www.sarasotahealth.org). Call the Flu Information Line at 941-861-2800 or visit a touch-screen health kiosk at all libraries and Senior Friendship Centers throughout Sarasota County.

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