



Health Advisory

Influenza Outbreak in a Long-term Facility

Current Situation:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports widespread influenza activity in California. The City of Berkeley Public Health Division has received a report of an influenza outbreak in a long-term care facility. Influenza Type A has been identified. The majority of the confirmed cases have been vaccinated with the influenza virus vaccine.

Symptoms:

The symptoms of influenza include fever (usually above 100° F), dry cough, sore throat, headache, extreme tiredness, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Fever is typically not associated with the common cold and therefore is an important symptom to consider when distinguishing between a cold and influenza. Some people, such as the elderly, may have atypical clinical presentations.

Transmission:

Influenza viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with influenza viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. It takes about 1 to 4 days after being exposed to the virus to develop symptoms. People may be contagious from one day before they develop symptoms to up to 7 days after they get sick.

Actions Requested in Long-term Care Facilities:

1. Influenza vaccination continues to be the primary strategy for influenza prevention. Assure that residents and staff are vaccinated with influenza vaccine. In addition, all residents should receive the pneumococcal vaccine.
2. Emphasize hygiene/cough etiquette for residents, healthcare staff, family members and visitors. Wash hands frequently with soap and warm water. Keep hands away from the mouth, eyes, and nose.
3. Conduct daily surveillance for acute upper respiratory illness and pneumonia among residents and staff.
4. Have symptomatic residents stay in their own rooms as much as possible, including restricting them from group activities and have meals served in their rooms when possible.
5. Exclude ill staff who have fever until they have been afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reduction medications.
6. Provide extra supplies throughout the facility such as personal protective equipment, soap, and paper towels.
7. Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces frequently with an Environmental Protection Agency-approved disinfectant or a freshly prepared sodium hypochlorite solution.
8. Report suspected outbreaks of influenza and/or influenza-like illness to **the City of Berkeley Public Health Division, Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit at (510) 981-5292.**

Sources for Information:

Recommendations for the Prevention and Control of Influenza California Long-Term Care Facilities:
https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/LTCF_PreventingHAI.aspx

Please distribute to all providers and staff in your practice.