



Three Dead After Four Confirmed Cases of H1N1 in West Texas 12/31/13

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Three people are dead after four confirmed cases of the H1N1 flu virus in the basin and the height of flu season is still to come. Two people died at Medical Center Hospital in Odessa just yesterday. Sources tell us one of them was a man in his early 50's.

Now doctors say it's not too late to get your flu shot and get protected.

Ector County Health Department PHEP Manager and Epidemiologist Amanda Robison-Chadwell tells CBS 7 the two people died at Medical Center yesterday from secondary complications related to H1N1 or swine flu. Midland Memorial says it had two cases in the past two weeks. One of those people is in stable condition and the other – an elderly person over 60 – died.

“It’s a type of flu,” said Dr. Sudip Bose, medical director for the Odessa Fire and Rescue Department and emergency medical physician at Medical Center Hospital. “There are certain patients who are at higher risk, according to the CDC Guidelines, patients over 65 and younger than two years old are at higher risk,” Bose said.

Symptoms of H1N1 are the same as any flu -- a cough, runny nose and fever. Basin residents are surprised to hear of four cases.

“Oh, it’s a scary thought because I have children,” said one Odessa man.
“I haven’t heard of their being cases here, but I might go get my shot now,” said another.

H1N1 is a strain of the flu covered by the flu vaccination, which you can still get at the health



department, local pharmacies or basin clinics. Ector County Health Officials say the height of flu season is in February.

"It's not too late," said Dr. Bose of getting your flu shot. "It takes about two weeks for it to kick in, if you're not sick and you haven't received your flu shot, you can get it."

On this busy New Year's Eve, preventing the spread of the flu might just mean staying home.

"It's taking responsibility if you're sick, washing your hands and perhaps even staying home if you need to," Dr. Bose said.

Bose says especially with young children, consider taking them to an urgent care or primary care physician before going to the emergency room unless their symptoms are grave. Bose says sometimes they recommend the "smile test", if your child is still smiling at any point during symptoms, their illness may not be bad enough for an emergency room visit.

Sometimes a trip to the ER can do more harm than good for a child.

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