

Whitman County Influenza Advisory 1/9/2013

Over the last week multiple cases of influenza have been identified and treated at local clinics, urgent cares, and emergency rooms. Rapid testing has identified both A and B strains and state confirmation is pending.

Most cases have involved unvaccinated individuals but there have been cases in high risk individuals who were appropriately immunized.

Health care providers should review current testing and treatment recommendations outlined at the cdc website, <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/index.htm>.

Briefly testing and treatment guidelines are listed below.

Who to test for Influenza:

- Persons at high risk for complications i.e. pregnant patients and those with asthma or chronic lung disease
- Immunocompromised individuals
- Hospitalized patients of any age with fever and respiratory symptoms
- Age over 65 or under 6 years of age
- Health care personnel with fever and respiratory symptoms
- Symptomatic close contacts of confirmed cases

Who to treat for Influenza:

- Persons at high risk for complications (including pregnant women)
- Hospitalized patients
- Anyone with severe illness identified within 48 hours of onset.

Remember it is never too late to vaccinate and this is the best way to prevent severe illness and complications of influenza.

Please call the Whitman County Health Department at 509-397-6280 for more information.