

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SECOND DEATH IN VIRGINIA ASSOCIATED WITH H1N1 VIRUS

(RICHMOND, Va.)— A second death in Virginia associated with the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus, also called swine flu, was announced today by State Health Commissioner Karen Remley, M.D., MBA.

The patient was an adult male from the Arlington Health District. Although the cause of death has not been confirmed, the H1N1 virus appears to have been a factor. The patient had an underlying medical condition that put him at greater risk of complications from flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported 127 deaths in the nation caused by the new virus. There have been 332 deaths in laboratory-confirmed H1N1 cases worldwide.

“We offer our condolences to the family for their loss,” Dr. Remley said. “The patient’s preexisting medical conditions, which increased his risk of complications from influenza, does not lessen the impact of his death.”

Unfortunately, since seasonal flu results in about 36,000 deaths nationwide and approximately 1,000 die in Virginia each year from influenza and pneumonia, deaths associated with the H1N1 virus are not unexpected, Dr. Remley added.

The Commissioner reminds all Virginians to be vigilant in guarding against the flu and its spread. Symptoms of influenza include fever, cough, sore throat, headache, body aches, chills or fatigue. People who experience these symptoms are asked to call their health care provider or local health department to discuss the possible need for treatment.

Some people are at higher risk for complications from the virus and are strongly encouraged to call their health care providers if they experience flulike symptoms. These include people with underlying chronic health conditions, pregnant women, the elderly and the very young.

People also are advised to protect their health against influenza and other infectious diseases by:

- Staying home from work or school when ill and limiting their contact with others to keep from infecting them

- Calling their health care providers or their health department before seeking care for influenza-like illness so that the necessary infection control measures can be put in place
- Covering their nose and mouth with a tissue when they cough or sneeze and throwing the tissue in the trash after use
- Washing their hands often with soap and water, especially after they cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective.
- Limiting close contact with sick people
- Preventing the spread of germs by not touching eyes, nose or mouth

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