



COUNTY OF ORANGE – HEALTH CARE AGENCY

PRESS RELEASE

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CDC Issues Health Alert about Severe Respiratory Illnesses Associated with Rhinoviruses and/or Enteroviruses Reported in Multiple States

(Santa Ana, CA) – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a Health Advisory to local health departments on September 9 regarding reports of increases in pediatric hospitalizations of patients with severe respiratory illness who also tested positive for rhinovirus (RV) and/or enterovirus (EV). RVs and EVs are typically associated with acute respiratory illness (ARI), including asthma, but can also cause a rare but serious neurologic complication involving limb weakness.

The CDC Health Alert notifies health providers to consider RV and/or EV as a possible cause of acute, severe respiratory illness (with or without) fever and recommends laboratory testing of respiratory specimens for patients who present with ARI.

“Orange County is seeing a lot of respiratory illnesses affecting our community right now, both in children and adults across the county resulting in hospitalizations,” said **Dr. Regina Chinsio-Kwong**, County Health Officer. “In addition to these respiratory viruses we are also seeing patients sick with Influenza (flu) and COVID-19. Please keep yourself, your family and our community safe by following recommended preventive measures.”

What people should do:

- Get your flu shot and COVID-19 vaccines to prevent complications from these viral illnesses.
- Mask around others and large groups.
- Wash your hands frequently, especially before and after eating and using the bathroom.
- Avoid close contact such as kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick, and when you are sick.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your upper shirt sleeve, not your hands.

- Do not go to school or work when you are symptomatic.

Residents are encouraged to contact a health care provider immediately if you or your child has trouble breathing or has a sudden onset of limb weakness. Additionally, ensure you or your child are following an up-to-date [asthma action plan](#) if you or your child have asthma.

Local clinicians who have any suspected cases are advised to immediately contact the OC Health Care Agency's Communicable Disease Control Division. For additional information see the attached [Health Advisory from the California Department of Public Health](#).

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