Health Alert

Chelan-Douglas Health District

200 Valley Mall Parkway, East Wenatchee, WA 98802

October 29th, 2026

Dear Chelan-Douglas Healthcare Partners,

As anticipated, we have entered an **early respiratory illness season**. On the week ending October 19th, 2026, our Emergency Department Visit for Influenza metric rose to 1.8% of ED visits, exceeding our respiratory illness season threshold of 1.5%.

Please follow these metrics on our new: Respiratory Illness Dashboard:

- https://cdhd.providerresourceswa.org/respiratory-illness-data-dashboard/

We will follow these metrics closely through the season and will conclude the season when all four metrics fall below threshold for two consecutive weeks.

As in previous seasons, please observe the following precautions in healthcare settings throughout the season:

1. Support staff in remaining up-to-date on vaccines for respiratory illnesses;
2. Perform handwashing/sanitizing before and after all patient encounters;
3. Adhere to appropriate personal protective equipment based on symptoms and diagnoses, including standard, contact, enteric, droplet and airborne precautions;
4. Wear N-95 masks when evaluating patients with symptoms of undifferentiated respiratory illness;
5. Screen entrants to facilities for symptoms of respiratory infection and respond with appropriate facility-based triage (patients) or exclusion (visitors or staff);
6. Reiterate and support staff in not coming to work with respiratory symptoms, and in following standard return-to-work guidance for healthcare settings, https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-10/420673-HCP-RTW-AVRIRecommendations.pdf;
7. Advise anyone (staff, visitor, employee) who has respiratory symptoms while in a healthcare facility to wear a surgical mask for source control
8. Employ universal masking with surgical masks or well-fitted N-95 respirators in all patient care areas. Each facility should designate which areas in their facility are “patient care areas.”
9. Apply universal masking to all areas of a facility that is experiencing an outbreak of a respiratory illness.

We appreciate and support the additional work put forth by healthcare partners to use even more specific action thresholds and precautionary measures. Please reach out our CD-Epi Department for further questions and continue to provide us with your input at CD-Epi@cdhd.wa.gov or 509-886-6400.

Respectively,



James Wallace, MD, MPH
Health Officer