

Urgent Message Regarding New Strain Influenza

On May 16 the first case of new strain influenza in Japan was confirmed in Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture.

Since then, then number of confirmed cases has increased and there is a high possibility that group infection has occurred in the Kansai region. It is very likely that the virus will spread to Saitama soon.

So, I implore all citizens of Saitama the following;

— Citizens of Saitama, _____

Regular seasonal flu precautions are effective in preventing infection of the new strain influenza. To prevent infection, it is important to take daily measures such as wearing a mask in public, washing your hands frequently, gargling and avoiding crowded places.

The infectiousness of the new strain influenza is the same as the seasonal flu.

If diagnosed and treated early on, many infected persons suffer mild symptoms and make a full recovery.

However, people with a chronic illness such as diabetes are more vulnerable to severe infection so should take sufficient precautions.

If you have symptoms such as a fever of 38 or more, a cough, or sore throat within 7 days of returning from a country where group infection is prevalent, firstly do not go to a hospital. Rather, telephone a Public Health Center or the Prefectural Fever Call Center.

The Prefectural Fever Call Center is open 24 hours 7 days a week including weekends and public holidays.

The call center will ask questions about your condition and if necessary will direct you to an outpatient clinic. Please follow the advice of the call center.

Saitama Prefecture will do everything to mitigate the spread of infection. I would like to ask the citizens of Saitama to stay calm and act on accurate information. Saitama Prefecture will regularly update the homepage with the latest information. Please continue to keep informed on the situation by paying attention to national and local news sources such as newspapers, television and radio.

May 18, 2009

Kiyoshi Ueda,
Governor of Saitama Prefecture
Director of Headquarters of Saitama Prefecture New Strain Influenza
Prevention Task Force