

## Southeast Health District

"Keeping Communities Safe and Healthy"

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## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Public Health encourages residents to take necessary precautions to prevent spread of flu

A 41-year-old Waycross woman who died Friday had flu-like symptoms at the time of her death, local Public Health officials said Monday. While the cause of her death is still unknown, Public Health officials are encouraging residents to take preventive measures to stop the spread of the seasonal flu and novel H1N1 flu viruses which are circulating in this area of the state.

“At the time of death, the individual was known to have flu-like symptoms, according to family and friends,” said Roger Naylor, Southeast Health District Public Information Officer.

“However, we are waiting for an autopsy report that may give us more information. If we learn anything new, we will let the public know.”

In the meantime, residents are reminded that there are several important and simple ways to **prevent** the spread of the flu virus:

- **Good hand washing** is absolutely critical and the best way to prevent the spread of germs. Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective. Wash hands before eating, after going to the bathroom, and after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- Germs spread when we cough or sneeze. **Cover coughs and sneezes** with your elbows or a tissue. Always properly dispose of used tissues and **avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth**. Germs spread that way.
- It is recommended that all students be up-to-date on immunizations and that everyone get a **seasonal flu shot** when available in the coming weeks. Currently, companies are

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working to develop a novel H1N1 flu shot. However, it may be mid-October before it is available to the public.

- **If you or your child is sick and/or has a fever, please stay home and limit contact with others to keep from spreading the infection.** Those who are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine may return to work or school.

Public Health officials are working closely with the local school system and other community partners to monitor flu activity in this county. The Southeast Health District and the health department will provide new information as it becomes available. For the most current information about novel H1N1 visit the Southeast Health District website at <http://www.sehdph.org/H1N1flu.htm> or the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu).

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