



635 North Erie Street
 Toledo, Ohio 43604-5317
 419.213.4100
 419.213.4017 Fax
 boardofhealth@co.lucas.oh.us



Karim Baroudi, MPH, REHS
 Health Commissioner

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Contact: Heather Burnette, PIO
 (419) 309-0153

January 14, 2026

**Health Department Reports
 Two Flu-Related Pediatric Deaths**

The Toledo-Lucas County Health Department is reporting two confirmed flu-related deaths in Lucas County, involving a child under the age of six, and a teen under the age of 18. These tragic losses highlight the seriousness of influenza and the impact it can have on families and communities.

“Our hearts are with the families who are grieving the loss of their children,” said Health Commissioner Karim Baroudi. “Influenza is a serious illness that can lead to severe complications, especially in children. We want families to know that precautions, vaccination, and early care are critical tools in reducing risk.”

The Ohio Department of Health reports that the state typically sees between one and seven influenza-associated pediatric deaths each season. For the 2025-2026 flu season, Ohio has now reported three deaths.

As influenza activity continues to increase in Lucas County and across Ohio, the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department is strongly encouraging residents to take steps to protect themselves and those around them. Flu vaccination remains the most effective way to reduce the risk of severe illness and complications, especially for young children, people with chronic health conditions, and those who live with or care for individuals at higher risk.

To make vaccination more accessible, TLCHD will host a walk-in flu vaccination day tomorrow, January 15, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. No appointment is required.

In addition to vaccination, the health department urges residents to take everyday preventive steps, including:

- Staying home when sick
- Washing hands frequently with soap and water
- Covering coughs and sneezes
- Seeking medical care promptly if flu symptoms persist or become severe

Symptoms of influenza can include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, fatigue, and in young children, vomiting or diarrhea. Parents and caregivers should seek medical attention immediately if a child experiences difficulty breathing, persistent high fever, bluish lips or face, dehydration, or extreme exhaustion.

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