



Eastern Highlands Health District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Eastern Highlands Health District Encourages Residents to Prepare For Flu Season

Shots (also called vaccinations or immunizations) play a huge role in keeping our community healthy. This August the Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) is proudly participating in National Immunization Awareness Month by encouraging all adults and their children to get the recommended seasonal and age specific vaccinations. Vaccinations are a safe and effective action you can take to prevent diseases that could result in serious health problems.

Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is an extremely contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Director of Health at EHHD, Rob Miller, comments that "we're encouraging all of our residents and their children to stay up-to-date with their vaccinations because staying healthy is a priority for all of us. One of our main concerns in the fall and winter months is the flu. The flu virus causes prolonged unpleasant symptoms such as body aches, fatigue and cough which can lead to several missed days of work or a spoiled holiday season. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year."

While it's not possible to predict the magnitude of this year's flu season, we do know that most seasonal flu activity typically occurs between October and May, with December through February being peak flu season months. The CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older get an annual flu vaccine. It's best to get the vaccine before the flu season begins in October; however, as long as flu viruses are circulating in the community, it's not too late to get vaccinated.¹

Some people, such as young children, people with certain medical conditions, the elderly and pregnant women, are at high risk for flu complications. Encouraging your loved ones who fall into these high risk categories to get the flu shot is important for their overall health and safety. If someone you know is at high risk for flu complications and displays symptoms of the virus they should get a medical evaluation as soon as possible.

Children 6 months of age and younger are too young to get the flu vaccine, but should be protected from any contact from someone with the flu. Taking preventative actions such as staying away from sick people, washing your hands and staying home from work or school if you have the flu will help keep your family and community healthy and safe.²



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EHHD suggests following these simple steps, recommended by the CDC, to protect yourself and your loved ones:

Step 1: Talk with a healthcare professional about which vaccines are right for you.

Your doctor or other healthcare professional can advise you on which vaccines you need and why – as well as which vaccines may not be right for you based on certain factors such as allergies to vaccine ingredients or health conditions.

Step 2: Get vaccinated.

Most health insurance plans cover the cost of recommended adult vaccines. Check with your insurance provider for details of coverage including where you can get vaccinated. Flu vaccines are offered by many doctors' offices, health departments, pharmacies and college health offices. Sign up for EHHD's hot topic list serv at www.ehhd.org to get notified when a flu clinic will be offered in your town.

Step 3: Encourage your friends and loved ones to get vaccinated.

All adults need immunizations to help them prevent getting and spreading serious diseases. After getting your vaccinations, talk to your friends and loved ones about getting protected too!

As parents start enrolling their children and teenagers in school and students begin returning to college campuses, it is a good time to focus community attention on the value and necessity of immunization.³

For more information on immunization across an individual's lifespan, please visit EHHD's website at www.ehhd.org/immunization. To receive monthly hot topic updates from EHHD, including when a flu clinic will be happening in your town, please sign up through EHHD's QNotify at www.ehhd.org. For more information or resources, such as immunization awareness materials to hand out to employees at your business or organization, please contact Ana Zeller at zellerae@ehhd.org.

^{1, 2, 3} Sources for this press release include cdc.gov, vaccines.gov and webmd.com.