



NEWS RELEASE

St. Charles County Government

Department of Community Health and the Environment

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT FLU SHOTS TO BEGIN SEPT. 17

St. Charles County, Missouri – Influenza (the flu) season begins in October and continues through the spring, which means that the time to schedule your flu shot is now —since it typically takes up to two weeks for protective antibodies to develop within the body.

To help safeguard the community against influenza, the St. Charles County Division of Public Health will begin offering flu vaccine for \$25 to adults and children on Monday, Sept. 17. Two types of vaccines — a traditional shot or a nasal spray — are available and designed to protect against the flu strains the World Health Organization predicts will be most common this year. Both types have been thoroughly tested and approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

Vaccinations are offered at the health department facility (located at 1650 Boone's Lick Road in St. Charles) every weekday except Thursday. Hours are 8:30 to 11 a.m. and 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. — open until 5:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. In addition, the facility's hours are extended until 7 p.m., on the second Tuesday of each month. Patients are asked to schedule an appointment for their visit, but walk-in customers are accepted on a space-available basis from 8:30 to 11 a.m., on Fridays. To schedule an appointment, please call 636-949-1857.

“A flu vaccine is the best way to protect against influenza,” Division of Public Health Director **Hope Woodson** said. “Although last season was considered one of the mildest ever, there is no way to predict the number of flu cases reported this year. With the start of the season coming soon, it's important to schedule your appointment now to best protect your family.”

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness that is spread through everyday interaction. The flu can range from a mild nuisance to a severe, life-threatening situation. Presenting with symptoms that range from a fever, cough, stuffy nose and general fatigue to a sore throat, headache and vomiting, the illness typically lasts for a few days to a long week. Some — especially those 65 or older, people with certain chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease), pregnant women, and young children — are at a higher risk for developing more severe complications if they get sick with the flu.

Along with getting the annual vaccine, there are two other basic steps you can take to protect against the illness. The first step is to take preventative actions to limit contact (cover your nose/mouth when coughing, wash hands with soap and hot water regularly and avoid close contact with others). If you do happen to become sick with the flu, the next precaution is to treat it with antiviral drugs and to stay home until at least 24 hours after your fever subsides.

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