



NEWS RELEASE

St. Charles County Government Department of Community Health and the Environment

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BATTLING INFLUENZA IS NOTHING TO SNEEZE AT *Flu Shots, Preventative Action Can Minimize Spread in Our Community*

St. Charles County, Missouri – Fever, cough, stuffy nose, sore throat, headache, vomiting and body aches are just a few of the symptoms you could experience by getting influenza (the flu).

Influenza can range from a mild nuisance to a severe, life-threatening situation. Having symptoms similar to those of the “common cold,” the flu can lead to more serious illnesses like pneumonia and bronchitis that may require hospitalization. In addition, some people (especially those 65 years and older, pregnant women, children five and under or those with chronic diseases like asthma, diabetes, immune disorders or heart disease) are at risk for developing life-threatening complications if they become sick with the flu.

Even though flu season is underway in the Midwest, it is not too late to receive the benefits of obtaining a vaccination — even if you’ve already suffered the flu this “season” (which typically runs from October through May in Missouri), as inoculation can help prevent against all three strains predicted as most common by the World Health Organization. Since flu activity usually peaks in January and February, it is important to obtain your vaccination now to accommodate the two weeks before preventative antibodies develop their full immunity.

While the best way to prevent the spread of this common illness is to get the annual flu vaccine (which comes in two forms — a traditional “shot” or a nasal spray), there are other steps you and your family can take to prevent the spread of the influenza virus. Along with the vaccine, simple preventative actions such as regularly washing hands with hot, soapy water; covering your nose/mouth when coughing or sneezing; and throwing away soiled tissues will help. In addition, affected individuals should limit close contact with others and stay home until at least 24 hours after a fever subsides.

To help safeguard the community against influenza, the St. Charles County Division of Public Health is offering intradermal flu vaccine for \$25 to adults aged 18-64. Vaccinations at the health department facility (located at 1650 Boone's Lick Road in St. Charles) are offered 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, hours are extended until 7 p.m., on the second Tuesday of each month. Patients are asked to schedule an appointment, 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.

For more information on ways to slow the spread of the flu, please visit www.FLU.gov or call the Division of Public Health at 636-949-7400.

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