



COMMUNITY HEALTH  
& THE ENVIRONMENT

## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **TAKE STEPS TO FIGHT THE FLU** *Vaccination Offers Best Protection, Get Yours Today*

*St. Charles County, Missouri* – Flu season is fast approaching, but getting a shot and taking other simple steps can minimize the spread of this contagious respiratory illness. As it takes approximately two weeks for vaccine antibodies to develop, a preventative vaccination received this month can protect you before the onset of the peak period (typically November through February for our region) and continue through the spring.

With symptoms such as fever, cough, stuffy nose, sore throat, headache, vomiting and general fatigue, the flu typically lasts for a few days to a long week. In some cases (especially ones involving young children, those 65 and older, or those with certain chronic medical conditions), the illness can be more severe and life threatening.

“A vaccination offers the most effective protection against influenza,” St. Charles County’s Division of Public Health Director Alison Tucker said. “Our Immunization Clinic offers flu vaccinations for children and adults, with two methods available, the traditional shot or a nasal spray.”

To help safeguard our community against influenza, the Immunization Clinic offers flu vaccinations for children and adults. The cost for the vaccination is \$25, but this cost can be covered by most insurance policies and may be waived for children participating in the Vaccines For Children program. For those ages 65 and older, a “high-dose” vaccination is available for \$40. These vaccinations are offered weekdays (except Thursdays) from 8:30 to 11 a.m. and 1:30 to 4 p.m., by appointment. To schedule an appointment or for more information, please call (636) 949-1857.

While the most effective way to prevent influenza illness is a vaccination, individuals and their families can take additional steps. Regular hand washing with warm, soapy water or a hand-sanitizer will remove germs. Covering your mouth whenever sneezing or coughing, and throwing away soiled tissues, will help minimize opportunities to spread the illness to others. A final protection for those who do become sick is to stay home and avoid contact with others until 24 hours after a fever subsides. For more information about the flu or for additional prevention efforts, please visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).

Preventing the flu is a community-wide effort. Along with individuals taking steps to protect themselves, medical providers report the incidence of positive cases each week to the health department to help track the illness in the community. The Division of Public Health compiles this information and issues a weekly report on the spread (which is available for view at <http://www.sccmo.org/407/Public-Health-Reports>).

For more information about obtaining a flu vaccine or about scheduling an appointment with the Immunization Clinic, please visit <http://www.sccmo.org/476/Immunizations> or call (636) 949-1857.

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