



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Charles County Public Health Recommends Vaccination to Protect Against Influenza

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 8 percent of the United States (about 26 million Americans) gets a flu-related illness each year, resulting in nearly 1 million hospitalizations and an estimated 80,000 deaths. These illnesses cost individuals and businesses about \$10 billion in medical expenses and \$16 billion in lost earnings.

While there is no way to predict the severity of activity in our community during flu season — October through mid-spring — there are ways individuals can protect themselves against catching, suffering through, and spreading this highly contagious virus. The St. Charles County Department of Public Health recommends:

1. All individuals 6 months of age or older receive a flu vaccination within the next four weeks.
2. Washing hands and surfaces regularly with soap and clean water or using sanitizer.
3. Covering mouths when coughing or sneezing.
4. Receiving medical care immediately after noticing flu symptoms and following doctor recommendations.
5. Individuals who are sick stay home until they have no fever for at least 24 hours.

“Vaccination is the most effective first step in building immunity against the flu,” says Department of Public Health Acting Director Sara Evers. “Shots decrease the risk for developing the flu and minimize the spread of it to those who are unable to receive vaccinations. For those who get a flu shot but become infected, symptoms are often reduced and the risk for severe complications or hospitalization is decreased.”

The Department of Public Health’s Immunization Clinic offers three types of flu shots this year, including:

- [Quadrivalent influenza vaccination](#) – This vaccination is designed to protect against the four most prevalent viruses expected this season: H1N1, H3N2, Influenza B/Victoria and Influenza B/Yamagata. It is appropriate for all individuals ages 6 months or older. Cost is \$36.
- [Quadrivalent Flublok influenza vaccination](#)– This vaccination protects against the four listed above and provides a higher amount of antigen than the traditional quadrivalent shot. It is designed for individuals ages 50-64 who are more likely to develop flu-related complications. Cost is \$62.
- [High-Dose influenza vaccination](#) – Designed for individuals ages 65 or older, this vaccination has four times the amount of antigen than in the traditional quadrivalent shot to boost the body’s ability to create antibodies against the illness. Cost is \$62.

Services through the Immunization Clinic are provided by appointment from 8:30 to 10:50 a.m. and 1:10 to 3:30 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. In addition, a limited number of walk-in clients are accepted from 8:30 to 10:50 a.m. and 1:10 to 3:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. Cash, check or credit card (includes a service fee), and private insurance is accepted. The clinic may be considered out-of-network by some insurance carriers. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, please call 636-949-1857.

Medical providers and community partners in St. Charles County are required to report incidences of positive flu cases to the Department of Public Health’s Communicable Disease program. The Division of Health Services compiles this information and shares a [weekly report on flu surveillance](#). Positive case updates should be faxed to 636-949-7414 throughout flu season.

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