



Connie Beck, Director
Social Services | Public Health | Mental Health

news release

Oct. 13, 2016

Stay healthy this season—get a flu vaccine now

Flu season has officially begun, and health officials say now is a good time to get vaccinated.

The Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) is offering the vaccine at its Public Health Clinic, 529 I St. in Eureka. Flu shots are also available through medical providers and at some area grocery stores and pharmacies.

A flu vaccine is needed every year to maintain existing immunity because flu viruses are constantly changing. The flu vaccine is formulated annually to keep up with the flu viruses.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older be vaccinated.

This season, the popular flu mist vaccine will not be offered. Earlier this year, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) cited concerns regarding poor effectiveness of the nasal spray against one of the flu strains that circulated during the 2013–14 and 2015–16 seasons. Since that same flu strain is anticipated during the 2016-17 season, ACIP has made the recommendation that the mist vaccine not be used.

"If you feel like you don't need a flu shot, think about those around you who may be more vulnerable," said Susan Buckley, Public Health director for DHHS. "Children, grandchildren, friends and family who are pregnant or may be immune compromised can be more susceptible to the illness. The shot will help you stay healthy as well as protecting those around you."

It takes up to two weeks after receiving the flu vaccine to achieve the best protection. Nationally, flu season lasts from October through May, and public health officials recommend getting the vaccine earlier in the season.

Common symptoms include a fever or feeling feverish, a cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headache and fatigue. Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, although this is more common in children than adults.

There is more you can do to prevent the spread of the flu in addition to getting a flu shot. Health officials recommend practicing the "3 Cs": Clean your hands, cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough and contain your germs by staying home if you're sick.

The cost of the flu vaccine at the clinic is \$17, although no one will be turned away for inability to pay. Medicare is accepted. Flu vaccine is offered by appointment only.

To make an appointment for a flu vaccine, call your health care provider or the Public Health Clinic at 707-268-2108.

-# # #-

Follow us on Twitter: @HumCoDHHS and
Facebook: www.facebook.com/humcodhhs.