



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

news release

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Flu season ramping up; vaccines still available

Local emergency rooms are currently reporting a high volume of patients coming in with influenza-like symptoms including coughs, sore throats and fevers, but health officials say staying home and getting rest is often the best way to combat the flu.

Humboldt County Health Officer Dr. Donald Baird said, "Unless you are experiencing severe symptoms such as difficulty breathing or have chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, or kidney disease, that put you at risk for more serious complications, consider staying at home, get rest, drink fluids, take medication to lower your fever and avoid spreading the infection to others."

While there's not a lot you can do to treat the flu once you have it, it's not too late to prevent it.

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

Supervising Public Health Nurse Eric Gordon said in some parts of the world, this year's vaccine has appeared to be less effective than in previous years, but getting vaccinated is still important.

"It's a good match and even if only partially effective, it is known that it produces at least an attenuated response, which means you might get sick, but it is less severe," he said.

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.

DHHS is offering the vaccine at its Public Health Clinic, 529 I St. in Eureka. 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. The vaccine is offered by

appointment only. Flu shots are also available through medical providers and at some area grocery stores and pharmacies.

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

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