



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Marie Brown

Public Information Officer

940-349-2921 Direct Line

Marie.Brown@dentoncounty.com

September 26, 2016-Denton County Public Health (DCPH) is reminding residents to take action now to prevent the flu, by getting a flu vaccine right away. October 1, Texas Influenza Awareness Day, kicks off the start of the flu season. While flu activity is currently low, getting vaccinated now will offer protection before it's too late. It's best to get vaccinated as soon as flu vaccine is available, because it takes about two weeks to build immunity.

“This is the time of year when we talk about influenza and how dangerous it can be,” says Dr. Matt Richardson, DCPH Director. “Because flu is ‘seasonal’ and we discuss it every year, it’s easy to forget the impact. Flu, along with pneumonia diagnosis, is the eighth leading cause of death in the US, and we have a vaccine to prevent it.”

DCPH is reminding residents that getting vaccinated not only protects yourself, but also family and friends. Vaccinating helps safeguard those who are at highest risk of complications or death from the flu, including these groups:

- Children younger than five, but especially children younger than two
- Pregnant women and women up to two weeks postpartum
- Adults 65 years of age and older
- People living in long-term care facilities, including nursing homes
- Native Americans and Alaskan Natives
- People with chronic health conditions such as asthma, neurological conditions, COPD, heart disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, kidney and liver disorders, cancer, and morbid obesity
- Travelers, and those living abroad

Annual vaccination is the best way to prevent the flu, but here are some other ways residents can stay healthy this flu season:

- Wash your hands often.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home when you feel sick, and keep sick kids home from school.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Practice good health habits, such as getting plenty of sleep and exercise, and managing your stress.

Residents can search flushot.healthmap.org to find a flu shot nearby. DCPH clinics have free flu vaccines available for those who qualify, including uninsured children and adults. Vaccines for all age groups are available, including quadrivalent and high dose varieties (visit www.dentoncounty.com/immunizations for details on qualifications).

Please visit www.texasflu.org for the latest information on flu in Texas, and www.cdc.gov/flu for details about symptoms, treatment, and prevention. You can also get updates though Twitter by following @CDCFlu.