



## **For Immediate Release**

**For More Information Contact:**  
**Kurt Koopmann**  
**Public Information Officer**  
**Galveston County Health District**  
**(409) 938-2211**  
**(409) 392-0007**  
[kkoopman@gchd.org](mailto:kkoopman@gchd.org)

**October 16, 2008**

### **Preventing Flu Helps in Ike Recovery**

**Galveston County and Cities** – While people are working hard to recover from Hurricane Ike it may be easy to forget doing some things that keep them healthy each year like getting a flu shot according to Dr. Cassandra Arceneaux, Galveston County Deputy Health Authority.

“It is always important to get an annual flu shot but after Ike it may be even more important since people may now be sharing housing with other family members, living in shelter settings or taking care of others which can all increase the risk of getting the flu,” says Arceneaux.

Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to complications, hospitalization, and even death. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu shot each year. October or November is the best time to get vaccinated, as flu season normally peaks in January or later.

In general, anyone who wants to reduce their chances of getting the flu can get vaccinated. However, it is recommended that certain people should get vaccinated each year. Most of these people are recommended for vaccination because they are at high risk of having serious flu complications or they live with or care for people at high risk for serious complications.

People recommended for vaccination during the 2008-09 flu season are: children aged 6 months up to their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday; pregnant women; people 50 years of age and older; people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions; people who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities; people who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including health care workers, household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu, household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age.

To date, there is no anticipated shortage of vaccine. Flu shots are \$20 each. Clinic staff will review Medicare cards for reimbursement at no cost to senior citizens.

Flu shot clinics will be conducted at the following locations:

**October 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Lake Haven, 1051 Columbia Memorial Parkway, League City, 1 p.m. to 3. p.m.

**October 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Dickinson Senior Citizens Center, 2714 Highway 3, Dickinson, 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

**October 27<sup>th</sup>:** Island Community Center, 4700 Broadway, Suite C133, Galveston, 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

**October 29<sup>th</sup>:** The Nessler Center, 2010 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Texas City, 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

**October 30<sup>th</sup>:** Wayne Johnson Community Center (Carbide Park), 4102 FM 519, La Marque, 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

**November 6<sup>th</sup>:** Bacliff Senior Citizens Center, 4503 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Bacliff, 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

The District is still working to schedule additional flu shot clinics in the county. As they are scheduled information will be distributed and posted on the Galveston County Health District web site [www.gchd.org](http://www.gchd.org) as it becomes available.

Flu shots area also available in the District's immunization clinics in Texas City, Dickinson and Galveston. For more information about Galveston County Health District immunization clinics and vaccine supply contact Immunization Nurse Manager, June Gonzales at (409) 938-2244 or see usual clinic times at [www.gchd.org/chn/IMM.htm](http://www.gchd.org/chn/IMM.htm).

Dr. Arceneaux points out that while the single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated each year, there are some other things a person can do to help prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu such as:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Practice other good health habits like getting plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

For more information about influenza and the flu vaccine visit the CDC website at: [www.cdc.gov/flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/)