



For Immediate Release

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Time for the NEW Seasonal Flu Shot

Galveston County and Cities – A sure sign of fall, it's once again time to get vaccinated against seasonal influenza.

The Galveston County Health District (GCHD) will begin to offer flu shots Monday, September 20th continuing throughout the flu season. GCHD annually encourages residents to get a flu shot.

"The past season of H1N1 vaccine and concern has ended and now we are starting a new season and campaign to prevent flu infections and complications. With the new season is a new vaccine developed to protect the public from strains of the flu expected to circulate this Fall and Winter," said Dr. Mark Guidry, GCHD CEO, and Galveston County Health Authority. "Get vaccinated now. It is one of the best ways to protect yourself and others from seasonal flu."

Influenza is not just a winter inconvenience, but 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.

This year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is recommending that everyone age 6 months and older get the flu vaccine, following lessons learned after last year's H1N1 flu season.

While it is recommended that everyone 6 months and older get the flu vaccine there are still high-risk populations that should make every effort to get vaccinated. These groups include children younger than five, adults 65 years of age and older, pregnant women, American Indians, Alaskan Natives and people

of any age with certain chronic medical conditions. For more information on who may be at high-risk and contraindications for vaccination, see www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm.

Seasonal flu shots typically contain three strains of influenza. The strains change from year to year depending on the ones health officials believe will be more prevalent.

This season's flu vaccine contains three strains of influenza virus expected to circulate in the United States. The three stains include the H1N1 strain, which unexpectedly appeared last spring, as well as the H3N2 virus and an influenza B strain. People who got an H1N1 vaccine last fall still should get this year's seasonal vaccine.

Flu shots are \$20 each. Staff will accept Medicare cards for reimbursement. Pneumonia vaccinations will also be available at a cost of \$30.

Seasonal flu vaccinations will be given in the main lobby of the GCHD Headquarters, 1207 Oak Street in La Marque from September 20 to October 1, Monday through Friday from 9 to 4.

Additional community flu shot clinics will be conducted at the following locations on the dates and times listed:

October 5th: Johnnie Arolfo Civic Center, 400 W Walker, League City, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

October 7th: Bacliff Senior Center, 4503 11th St, Bacliff, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

October 14th: Dickinson Senior Center, 2714 Hwy 3, Dickinson, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

October 21st: Wayne Johnson Community Center, 4102 FM 519, La Marque, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Beginning September 20th residents may also get flu shots 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.

Dr. Guidry 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. Everyone should be careful to wash

their hands frequently and cover their coughs. A proper hand washing video can be found at www.gchd.org/chn/Handwashing.html.

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