



## **For Immediate Release**

**September 21, 2011**

### **Make time for a Flu Shot**

**Galveston County and Cities** – The Galveston County Health District (GCHD) reminds everyone that fall is arriving meaning once again it's time to get vaccinated against seasonal influenza.

“Even if you had a flu shot during the last season, with the new season a new flu shot is needed to protect you from the strains of the flu expected to circulate this Fall and Winter,” said Dr. Dana Beckham, GCHD’s Director of Community Health Services. “The protection provided by the vaccine decreases over time, so everyone needs to be immunized each year.”

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

- October 4<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Johnnie Arolfo Civic Center, 400 W. Walker St., League City;
- October 6<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Bacliff Senior Center, 4503 11<sup>th</sup> St., Bacliff;
- October 13<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Dickinson Senior Center, 2714 Highway 3, Dickinson;
- October 20<sup>th</sup>, 12 noon to 2 p.m., Friendswood Activity Building, 416 Morningside, Friendswood;
- October 27<sup>th</sup>, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Wayne Johnson Community Center (Carbide Park), 4102 FM 519, La Marque.

For those unable to attend one of the community flu shot clinics the Health District is also offering shots throughout the flu season at their immunization clinics located in:

- Galveston, 4700 Broadway; Monday 8 am to 11:30 am & 1 pm to 4:30 pm; Wednesday 10 am to 2 pm & 3 pm to 7 pm
- Texas City, 2000 Texas Avenue; Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 8 am to 11:30 am & 1 pm to 4:30 pm; Tuesday 10 am – 2 pm & 3 pm to 7 pm
- Dickinson, 3411 Gulf Freeway; Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 8 am to 11:30 am & 1 pm to 4:30 pm

Flu shots are \$20 each, and staff will accept Medicare cards for reimbursement

For additional information on GCHD's immunization services visit their website at [www.gchd.org/chn/IMM.htm](http://www.gchd.org/chn/IMM.htm), or call (409) 938-2244.

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.

The Center for Disease Control recommends for the 2011-2012 flu season that everyone 6 months and older receive an annual flu shot. The CDC also says that children ages 6 months to 8 years who did not get at least one dose of the 2010-2011 flu vaccine should get two doses of the vaccine this season. Vaccination is encouraged now because it takes about two weeks for the vaccine to become effective.

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:

- Pregnant women
- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
- 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 (these children are too young to be vaccinated)

Flu vaccine is reformulated each year to match the influenza viruses expected to circulate. Experts anticipate continuing to see the same types of flu as last year, so the vaccine will again protect against the strains A/California (H1N1), A/Perth (H3N2) and B/Brisbane.

The health district offers these additional tips for preventing the flu; wash hands with soap and hot water and keep hand sanitizers nearby as a backup, stay home when sick, maintain personal space away from other people, cough or sneeze into an elbow or use a tissue and properly dispose of it immediately, keep hands away from face – especially eyes, nose and mouth, and teach children to wash their hands properly.

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*(News Media: For more information contact Kurt Koopmann, GCHD Public Information Officer, 409-938-2211 or [kkoopman@gchd.org](mailto:kkoopman@gchd.org))*