



Health and Human Services **MEDIA RELEASE**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Protect yourself and others from flu

SARASOTA, FL — The Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County (DOH-Sarasota) encourages everyone to get a flu vaccine as your best defense against circulating seasonal flu viruses. Health officials say flu activity has peaked earlier in recent years making a good case for getting vaccinated well before the holidays.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends an annual flu vaccine for everyone six months of age and older. This includes children under 5, adults over age 65 and pregnant women, who are at risk of miscarriage, hospitalization and even death if they get the flu. Health care providers, those living with chronic health conditions, and healthy people should also get vaccinated.

“Only one dose of vaccine is needed for most people. You can expect to have immunity within two weeks of vaccination. The protection you get from the vaccine will continue throughout the flu season,” says Dr. William Heymann, Medical Director for the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County.

In addition to getting a vaccination (flu shot), follow these simple steps to avoid the flu:

1. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
2. Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue, or the inside of your elbow, not your bare hand. Dispose of used tissues, and wash hands.
3. Stay at home when you are sick. Keep sick children home. Stay home until free from fever at least 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).

For more information about flu and where to get a flu vaccine, visit www.sarasotahealth.org or Find a Flu Shot Locator: <http://flushot.healthmap.org/>. You can also call the DOH-Sarasota Flu Info Line: 941-861-2800.

DOH-Sarasota is part of a statewide network of county health departments that work to protect, promote and improve the health of residents and visitors through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Sarasota County prohibits discrimination in all services, programs or activities.

View the complete policy at www.scgov.net/ADA/Pages/default.aspx



MEDIA NOTES:

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