

Nov. 18, 2014



SARASOTA
COUNTY SCHOOLS

Health and school officials gear up to “Teach Flu a Lesson”

No-cost children’s flu vaccines to be available at schools across the county on Dec. 10-11

SARASOTA COUNTY – Local health and school officials have teamed up to “Teach Flu A Lesson” during National Influenza Immunization Awareness Week, Dec. 7-13.

Sarasota County Schools and the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County have partnered with Healthy Schools, LLC to provide no-cost flu vaccine to students, with parental consent. Ten teams of nurses from Healthy Schools, LLC will be mobilized to provide flu vaccines to students on Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 10-11. Vaccines will be provided at all 54 Sarasota County traditional public and charter schools. The schedule is available at www.sarasotacountyschools.net under the ‘Announcements’ tab.

Qualified health professionals will administer either the traditional flu shot or the inhaled influenza vaccine, based on an assessment of which vaccine is appropriate for each student.

With the holiday season approaching, health officials expect to see a surge in flu-related illnesses in communities. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the flu vaccine is the best defense against the seasonal flu and has a very [good safety record](#). Those who get vaccinated can expect to get protection within two weeks. The flu vaccine does not cause the flu.



Nasal flu vaccine
Source: CDC Public Health Image Library

Unlike the common cold, the flu can cause severe illness and life-threatening complications. Getting vaccinated not only protects you from the flu, but it can also prevent you from spreading it to friends and family as well. Local health officials say that because outbreaks of flu-like illness can occur in the schools and then spread to families it is important that children get immunized.

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Take Action to Fight the Flu:

1. Take time to get the flu vaccine.
2. Take everyday precautions to prevent the spread of the germs:
 - **Wash your hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner. For more information and downloadable hand washing reminders, visit www.cleanhandscampaign.com.
 - **Cover your coughs** and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue, or the inside of your elbow -- not your bare hand. Throw used tissues in the trash and wash hands.
 - **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).
3. Take antiviral medications to shorten to the severity and duration of the flu if your doctor prescribes them.

For more information, call DOH-Sarasota's Office of School Health at 941-927-9000, ext. 32101 or visit the district's website, www.sarasotacountyschools.net under the 'Announcements' tab.

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