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DOH-COLLIER REMINDS RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO GET THEIR FLU SHOT



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Naples, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Collier County (DOH-Collier) is reminding residents and visitors to get their flu vaccine before the peak of flu activity. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), during last year's record breaking flu season, there were nearly 80,000 deaths from the flu. Protect yourself, your family, and your community from the flu this season by getting your flu vaccine soon.

Flu vaccines can vary in effectiveness from season to season, but they continue to be the best way to prevent influenza infection and serious influenza complications. To locate a flu shot near you, contact your health care provider or use DOH's flu shot locator:

www.flhealth.gov/findaflushot

The CDC advises getting your flu vaccine every year as the first and most important step in protecting against influenza and its potentially serious complications. Everyone six months and older is recommended to get the flu vaccine, including pregnant women. Getting the flu vaccine every year is important because flu viruses evolve quickly, and last year's vaccine may not protect against the current year's flu strain. Even if the flu vaccine does not fully protect against the flu, it may reduce the severity of symptoms and the risk of complications. It is also important to get vaccinated to help protect our most vulnerable populations. Individuals at a higher risk of flu-related complications include children less than 5, adults over the age of 65, individuals with weakened immune systems, pregnant women, and people with chronic medical conditions such as heart or lung disease. DOH-Collier offers free flu vaccines for children 6 months through 18 years of age with no appointment necessary at our Naples and Immokalee sites. Flu vaccines are also available for adults 19 years of age and older at our Naples (appointment required) and Immokalee sites.

In addition to getting the flu vaccine, DOH-Collier recommends the following steps to avoid catching or spreading the flu:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- When coughing or sneezing, use your shirt sleeve, elbow, or tissue. Throw tissues away immediately after use.
- Avoid touching your mouth, nose, and eyes as germs are spread this way.
- Disinfect surfaces and objects that may have been contaminated with germs.
- Avoid close contact with individuals who are sick.
- If you have flu-like symptoms, the CDC recommends staying home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, unless you are seeking medical care or other necessities.

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The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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