

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

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State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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Florida Department of Health reminds pregnant women of flu vaccination importance

Tallahassee - The Florida Department of Health reminds pregnant women, and those looking to become pregnant, that the 2013-2014 flu season is underway and to make sure they get vaccinated against influenza.

The Department recommends that all individuals six months of age and older receive the flu vaccination each year. It is especially important for pregnant women to be vaccinated due to the increased risk of complications associated with contracting the flu while pregnant. The Department has received several reports of pregnant women with influenza-like illness from around the state, including one confirmed death and four severe cases in which women have been admitted into critical care units. The flu vaccination is safe and will protect the mother, the unborn child, and will also help protect babies during the first months after birth.

Pregnant women should also be reminded to get immunized by a flu shot injection. Standard dose nasal spray vaccines, while effective for people ages two through 49, are not recommended for use by pregnant women.

“It is highly advised that pregnant women receive the influenza vaccination either before or during pregnancy,” said Dr. Celeste Philip, Deputy Secretary for Health and Deputy State Health Officer for Children’s Medical Services (CMS). “Flu can be a serious health concern for both the expecting mother and their unborn child. Pregnant women should take all precautionary steps possible to protect themselves and their babies against influenza this season.”

Additional flu prevention steps include washing your hands often, keeping your hands away from your face and covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing and coughing. Symptoms of the flu include headache, fever, severe cough, runny nose or body aches. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, see your primary care provider immediately for guidance on treatment. For more information on pregnant women and influenza, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/pregnant.htm>

Flu vaccines are offered in many locations, including doctor’s offices, clinics, health departments, retail stores, pharmacies, health centers, and by many employers and schools. It is important for you and your family members to get a flu vaccine every year. Check with your physician, your local [county health department](#) or visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/prevention-safety-and-wellness/flu-prevention/locate-a-flu-shot.html> to search for a location to receive a flu vaccine.

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