

Mission:

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



Rick Scott
Governor

Celeste Philip, MD, MPH
Surgeon General and Secretary

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

- Q Where can I find guidance on antiviral use for treatment and chemoprophylaxis of influenza.
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6001a1.htm>

- Q: Availability of Antivirals and Vaccine
 - Current antiviral demand is high, and some pharmacies may run out of antivirals before the next shipment comes in but suppliers are meeting demands. Patients should be advised to call their pharmacy ahead to verify availability.
 - The supply of generic oseltamivir may be limited, the brand (Tamiflu) should be available
 - If the oral suspension of oseltamivir is not available, pharmacies may compound suspension from the capsules.
 - Vaccine is still available in Florida.
 - Some health care providers may no longer carry influenza vaccine,
 - Vaccine is available at local county health departments (CHDs).
 - Most pharmacies provide influenza vaccines to adults, pharmacies with health-care clinics also offer flu vaccines to children 18 months and older.
 - Advise patients to call their primary care provider, CHD or pharmacy to verify the availability of vaccine.

- Q: How much of an impact does physician vaccination recommendation have on vaccine uptake?
 - People are more likely to get vaccinated if recommended by their providers.
 - For example, pregnant women receiving a recommendation and offer of vaccination by their providers were over 6 times more likely to get vaccinated (65%) vs. women who did not receive a recommendation or offer (10%).
(www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview/pregnant-coverage_1516estimates.htm)

Talking points when discussing flu with patients

- Q Is it too late to get vaccinated against flu?
 - No. We expect the flu season to last for a while. It is important to get vaccinated soon, it takes two weeks for the vaccine to kick in.

- Q: How long does a flu vaccine protect an individual from getting the flu?
 - The flu vaccine is safe, and yearly vaccination provides the best protection against the flu throughout flu season. The flu virus changes from year to year so the flu vaccine also gets an annual update. For that reason, it is important for everyone 6 months of age and older to get a flu vaccine every flu season.

- Q: Can the flu vaccine provide protection even if the flu vaccine is not a “good” match?
 - Yes, antibodies made in response to vaccination with one flu virus may provide protection against different, but related flu viruses.

- Even if you do get the flu after getting vaccinated, a yearly flu vaccine helps in protecting against serious complications such as hospitalization and death.
 - A 2017 study published in *Pediatrics* showed that flu vaccination can significantly reduce influenza pediatric mortality by half (51%) among children with underlying high-risk medical conditions and nearly two-thirds (65%) among healthy children (www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2017/p0403-flu-vaccine.html).
 - A 2017 study published in *Clinical Infectious Diseases* showed that flu vaccination reduced deaths, intensive care unit (ICU) admissions, ICU length of stay, and overall duration of hospitalization among hospitalized flu patients (www.cdc.gov/flu/spotlights/vaccine-reduces-severe-outcomes.htm).
 - Vaccinated adults were 52-79% less likely to die than unvaccinated flu-hospitalized patients.
 - Vaccinated adults 18-49 years of age and 65 years of age and older hospitalized from flu were 37% less likely to be admitted to the ICU than those who were not vaccinated.
 - Six children have died from flu in Florida to date this season (between October 2017-February 2018). All were unvaccinated.
- Q: Some news reports have claimed the flu vaccine is expected to be only 10% effective this year, is this true?
 - No, the Interim CDC Vaccine Efficacy figures in the United States were released on 02/15/2018. The Vaccine Efficacy (VE) for adults was 36%. The VE for Children was 59%. With Several more weeks of elevated influenza activity expected, an increasing proportion of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and Influenza B viruses, and the potential to prevent significant illness through influenza vaccination, CDC continues to recommend influenza vaccination at this time.
- Q: Is the Florida Department of Health providing recommendations for mass gatherings?
 - Individuals in High Risk populations should consider delaying or avoiding mass gatherings.
 - High risk populations include:
 - Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old.
 - Adults 65 years of age and older
 - Pregnant women
 - Residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
 - People who have medical conditions including (but not limited to):
 - Asthma
 - Neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions (including disorders of the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nerve, and muscle such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, stroke, moderate to severe developmental delay, muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury)
 - Chronic lung disease
 - Heart Disease
 - Blood disorders
 - Kidney disorders
 - Liver disorders
 - Metabolic disorders
 - Weakened immune system due to disease or medication

- People younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy
 - People with extreme obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or more)
- Individuals who are sick, should avoid mass gatherings until they are fever free for a minimum of 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

Please report any barriers to getting patients vaccinated or treated for flu to the StateESF8planning@FLHealth.gov