

**Mission:**

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



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
November 18, 2013

**Contact:** DOH Communications  
(850) 245-4111

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH REMINDS FLORIDIANS OF FLU VACCINE CHOICES**

**TALLAHASSEE** - The Florida Department of Health reminds residents and visitors that the 2013-2014 flu season has begun and flu vaccination is recommended. The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year.

“It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body which protect against the influenza virus infection,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John H. Armstrong. “I encourage Floridians to receive the vaccination now before the flu begins to potentially impact your community.”

It is recommended that individuals six months of age and older receive a flu vaccine every year which protects against influenza viruses most likely to circulate and cause illness that season. There are several flu vaccine options:

- Flu vaccines that protect against three or four different flu viruses are available this season.
- A traditional [seasonal flu shot](#) is available for people six months and older, a flu shot that is egg-free is available for people 18 through 49 years of age, a [high dose flu shot](#) is available for people 65 and older and an [intradermal flu shot](#) is approved for people 18 to 64 years of age.
- Standard dose nasal spray vaccines are also available for healthy, non-pregnant people from two through 49 years of age.

Immunizations are a safe and effective medical intervention and the nasal spray option makes it easier on young children who may fear needles. Healthy Schools LLC and Clay County Public Schools partnered with the Florida Department of Health in Clay County recently to administer the flu nasal mist with parents' consent to students at all 41 schools. Former Jacksonville Jaguar Tony Boselli's foundation, along with health insurance companies and other local foundations covered the cost for the initiative.

The Florida Department of Health in Alachua County leads the Control Flu program which is a School-located Influenza Vaccination (SLIV) program that provides free nasal spray vaccinations to pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students with parental consent. The vaccination is administered on campus during regular school hours in public and participating private schools throughout Alachua County.

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. The Department recommends staying at home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone if you or your children are sick with a flu-like illness, unless you need medical care. For more flu prevention information, visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/prevention-safety-and-wellness/flu-prevention/index.html>.

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.

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at @HealthyFla and on Facebook. For news story ideas, interviews, videos and more from DOH Communications visit the DOH Online Newsroom <http://newsroom.doh.state.fl.us/>.

###