

No Cost Flu vaccines still available at local health units

Baton Rouge, La. (February 5, 2018) – The Louisiana Department of Health will continue to offer flu vaccines at no cost at parish health units across the state until Monday, February 12, 2018. The vaccine is available to anyone who has not yet received a vaccine this flu season.

Because of the level of flu activity and the success of the no-cost flu clinics held last week when more than 2,800 vaccines were administered at more than 60 locations across the state, the Department is extending this effort to meet the demand and need for flu vaccinations in Louisiana.

“Louisiana is experiencing a severe flu season and the strain of the flu we are seeing now is one that typically causes more severe illness, and results in higher hospitalization rates and deaths,” said Dr. Frank Welch, state immunization medical director. “Hospitals continue to report large numbers of sick patients and providers are reporting high numbers of patient visits due to flu and flu-like symptoms.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Louisiana Department of Health recommend a yearly flu shot for everyone over six months of age who does not have a complicating condition, such as a prior allergic reaction to the flu shot.

Wear short or loose-fitting sleeves and bring your private insurance, Medicaid or Medicare card if you have one.

To schedule an appointment to receive a vaccination, find the Parish Health Unit nearest to you by visiting <http://ldh.la.gov/FightTheFlu> and then call to schedule your visit.

Flu Shot Facts

Flu activity in Louisiana continues to be high throughout the state. The Office of Public Health monitors patients with flu-like symptoms using a health care provider surveillance system. In a typical flu season, the system reports about five percent of people seeking care at doctor’s offices, clinic and hospitals have flu-like symptoms. Currently this year, the number is more than 10 percent.

A flu shot is especially crucial for people who may be at higher risk for serious complications. This includes babies and young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions and people 65 years and older.

The flu shot is safe for pregnant and breastfeeding women, who can pass on antibodies to their babies that will help protect them.

The flu shot starts to offer partial protection immediately but takes about two weeks to offer full protection.

Visit www.ldh.la.gov/fighttheflu for more information and resources.

About the Louisiana Department of Health

The Louisiana Department of Health strives to protect and promote health statewide and to ensure access to medical, preventive and rehabilitative services for all state residents. The Louisiana Department of Health includes the Office of Public Health, Office of Aging & Adult Services, Office of Behavioral Health, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, and Healthy Louisiana (Medicaid). To learn visit www.ldh.la.gov or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), or our [blog](#).