

FREE FLU SHOTS @ STUDENT HEALTH CENTER

It is not too late to receive influenza (flu) vaccine to prevent getting the flu. According to the Los Angeles Public Health Department, flu activity is elevated and is increasing throughout Los Angeles County.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that influenza activity has increased significantly in recent weeks and is now widespread in the state of California. Flu can cause hospitalization and death. Receiving the flu vaccine is the most effective way to protect yourself and others from getting the flu.

Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself from the flu. There are additional steps you can take to keep yourself and your family healthy.

Take everyday precautions, like washing your hands, to protect your health. If you are exposed to or caring for someone with the flu, talk to your doctor about preventive antiviral medications.

What is the best way to protect myself and my family from the flu?

Everyone 6 months of age and older should be vaccinated against the flu every year. Flu vaccination is especially important for people who are at greater risk for complications from flu and those who live with or care for these individuals. Groups of people that are at high risk for flu complications include children younger than 5 years, adults 65 years and older, and pregnant women. Medical conditions such as asthma, chronic lung or heart disease, diabetes and being overweight (body-mass index >40) can also increase your risk for flu complications.

People at higher risk for complications from the flu should seek medical care as soon as they begin to feel ill, whether or not they have been vaccinated. They could benefit from antiviral therapy that can reduce the risk of experiencing complications and reduce the severity and duration of illness. Antiviral therapy is most effective when given early in the course of illness.

What are everyday steps I can take to stop the spread of germs?

In addition to getting a flu vaccine, practicing good hygiene can help prevent getting and spreading the flu. This includes washing your hands, covering your coughs and sneezes, not touching your eyes, nose, or mouth, and staying home if you're sick.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people. Practice good health habits. Get plenty of sleep and exercise, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat healthy food. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

How do I know if I have the flu?

Symptoms of the flu include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue. Pneumonia is the most common complication of the flu. Students with influenza or influenza like illness or with any fever, should not attend classes until they have gone 24 hours without fever. Flu can also aggravate underlying health conditions like heart disease or asthma. Annually, thousands of people nationwide are hospitalized or die from influenza- associated illness. For more information about the flu please visit the Public Health website at: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/FluSeason/>

Are there medications I can take to prevent getting the flu?

If you are healthy but exposed to a person with the flu, antiviral drugs can prevent you from getting sick. The sooner you are treated with an antiviral, the more likely it will prevent the flu. Antiviral drugs are 70% to 90% effective at preventing the flu. Talk to your health care provider if you think you need antiviral drugs.

The above information was taken from <http://www.flu.gov/prevention-vaccination/prevention/index.html#>, for more information [click here](#)