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FLU ACTIVITY ON THE RISE: IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO GET YOUR FLU SHOT



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Pensacola, Fla. – Flu season is well underway with notable increases statewide. The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (FDOH-Escambia) encourages everyone to protect against flu. Across our state, eight new outbreaks of flu or flu-like illness were reported in week five of 2019, and among the most impacted settings were schools, child care centers, nursing facilities, and other long-term care facilities.

"It's not too late to get your flu shot," says FDOH-Escambia director, John J. Lanza, MD, PhD, MPH, FAAP, FHPS. "Everyone over six months of age should get the flu shot, especially those with increased risk for flu-related complications."

Getting the flu shot can reduce flu illnesses, doctor visits, and missed work and school due to flu as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for your body to develop protection against the flu.

Although flu vaccines can vary in effectiveness from season to season, they continue to be the best way to prevent flu and serious complications. People with increased risk for flu-related complications include children from birth to age 5, adults age 65 and older, pregnant women, and people who have existing medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease.

Protect Yourself and Others Against Flu

- Get the flu shot. To locate a flu shot near you, contact your physician, your county health department, or use the department's flu shot locator: www.floridahealth.gov/findaflushot;
- Practice good hygiene by properly and frequently washing your hands to help prevent the spread of flu;
- Clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces in your home, school or office; and
- Stay home from work or school if you are sick. Take additional prevention steps by coughing or sneezing into a tissue or your elbow and avoiding touching your face.
- If you are sick, call your primary care physician for evaluation and treatment.

In most situations, flu can be handled at home especially after consultation with your primary care physician. This prevents overloading acute care facilities, including emergency departments.

For the most current information about flu activity in Florida, please see [Florida's weekly surveillance report, the Florida Flu Review](#).

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About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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