



NEWS RELEASE

Public Health

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Residents are urged to get the flu vaccine

San Bernardino County residents are urged to prepare for the upcoming influenza (flu) season by getting a flu vaccine, especially in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Getting a flu vaccine will not only reduce risk of illness, hospitalization, and even death, but will also help reduce the burden on our healthcare systems responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated,” said Dr. Erin Gustafson, County Interim Health Officer. “Early vaccination will provide protection throughout flu season and into the spring.”

Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to death. Since the flu can affect all age groups, everyone six months of age and older should get a flu vaccine in early fall, just before the flu season starts in November.

To stop the spread of flu and other respiratory illnesses:

- Cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and throw the tissue in the trash after use.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after a cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers may be used if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid close contact with sick people and stay home from work or school if you get sick and limit contact with others.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is also important to continue to avoid gatherings, wear a face covering, and keep six feet distance from others.

This is also the perfect time for residents to ensure they have received all needed vaccinations, especially older adults. Adults over the age of 65 are at higher risk of developing serious complications from flu, such as pneumonia and are highly encouraged to get the pneumococcal vaccine.

To find free flu vaccination clinics throughout the county, visit <https://wp.sbcounty.gov/dph/flu>.

The pneumococcal vaccine is available for those with no insurance or whose insurance does not cover the vaccine. To make an appointment for the pneumococcal vaccine, please call the Communicable Disease Section at (800) 722-4777.

