



Public Health
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Henderson County Department of Public Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Department to offer flu vaccine to all public school students

Hendersonville, NC (September 17, 2015) — The Department of Public Health will offer seasonal flu vaccine to all public school students in grades K-12 at in-school clinics beginning in October. Ten school nurses will make vaccine available during school hours to over 13,300 students and staff in 23 schools. Last year, flu vaccine was offered to all students, but clinics were held only in the elementary schools.

“We expect a huge increase in the number of students receiving vaccine because of the success of last year’s initiative in the elementary schools,” said Kim Berry, school nurse supervisor. “Flu can spread easily, and school-aged children can be a primary source of flu outbreaks. We hope that students take advantage of this opportunity.”

Berry stated that the partnership between Henderson County Public Schools, Pardee Hospital, Park Ridge Health and the Department of Public Health to protect students against the flu will also benefit the community with more protection for those unable to take flu vaccine, less absenteeism for students and less missed work for parents who have to care for sick children.

Parents will receive a call alert from the school system announcing the date of their child’s clinic and the deadline for returning the consent form. The schedule, consent form, notice of privacy and vaccine information statements can be accessed at www.hendersoncountyflu.org. Anyone unable to access these documents can ask their school nurse for a packet.

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Both nasal spray and injection will be available, and all vaccine is quadrivalent, which means it protects against four flu viruses. Insurance or cash/check is required to receive the vaccine. Nasal spray is \$39; injection is \$38. The health department accepts the following insurance: Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC, United Health Care, MedCost, NC Health Choice and Medicaid.

During the past 2014 - 2015 season, North Carolina recorded its highest number of flu-associated deaths in the past six years. This is a reminder that flu can be a serious illness, especially for adults over 65, children under five, pregnant women and those with certain medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease.

The best way to prevent flu is by getting vaccinated every year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends an annual influenza vaccine for everyone six months of age and older.

The health department will offer flu vaccine to the general public beginning October 1. No appointment will be necessary. The Immunization Clinic is open Monday - Friday, 8:00 - 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. For questions, call the Immunization Clinic at (828) 694-6015.

For flu vaccine updates, call the Public Health Hotline at (828) 694-4040 or visit www.hendersoncountyflu.org.

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