



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## Henderson County Department of Public Health

Steven E. Smith, MPA, Health Director | Diana Curran, MD, Medical Director

1200 Spartanburg Highway, Suite 100, Hendersonville, NC 28792

Main Phone: (828) 692-4223 | Administration FAX: (828) 697-4709

Clinic FAX: (828) 697-4691 | Communicable Disease FAX: (828) 697-4504

---

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 23, 2018

### Media Inquiries Please Contact:

Kim Horton 828-694-6064

[khorton@hendersoncountync.org](mailto:khorton@hendersoncountync.org)

## Health Director urges residents to protect themselves from flu

**Hendersonville, NC (January 23, 2018)** Henderson County Health Director Steve Smith said that the flu is widespread across Henderson County and the state, and that residents should take actions to prevent infection.

“It isn’t too late to vaccinate,” Smith said. “We strongly encourage people to protect themselves by getting a flu shot this season if they haven’t already. Even healthy people can get the flu.”

While flu vaccine can vary in how well it works, it is the best way to prevent flu illness and serious flu complications, including those that can result in hospitalization. Flu vaccine is not perfect, and some people who get vaccinated may still get the flu, but data suggests that flu vaccination may make illness milder, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“Vaccination protects people who are at greater risk of becoming seriously ill from flu, like older adults, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions (including obesity), babies and young children,” Smith said.

This year, the vaccine may not be a good match with the flu strain that is going around. Even so, the vaccine protects against other strains of flu that are circulating. In some flu seasons, we have more than one strain.

--More--

The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services' latest influenza summary report for the week ending January 13 announced 10 flu-related deaths for the week and a total of 42 flu-related deaths this season in our state.

Flu infections are most common from late fall to early spring in North Carolina, with peak activity usually occurring in January or February. The CDC recommends yearly vaccination against the flu for everyone 6 months and older.

Smith stated that in addition to the flu vaccine, there are other actions to take to limit the spread of flu. "Wash your hands especially after coughing or sneezing. Stay home if you are sick."

If you are at risk for complications, your doctor may recommend antiviral medicine to prevent or to treat Influenza infection. Those at risk of pneumonia or hospitalization from the flu include children under age 2 years or those 65 and older, pregnant women, and those with chronic conditions such as lung diseases (Asthma or COPD) or diabetes. This medicine should be started within 48 hours of getting sick or exposed to the flu, so talk to your doctor if you are at risk of complications from the flu.

Flu shots are available in our community at the health department, private medical offices, hospitals and pharmacies. For more information on influenza and the vaccine, visit [HendersonCountyFlu.org](http://HendersonCountyFlu.org) or call the Immunization Clinic at 828-694-6015.

The N.C. Division of Public Health posts updates on flu surveillance data every Thursday during flu season at <http://flu.nc.gov>.

###