

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flu Shots will be available for those at highest risk

(Las Vegas, Nev., - December 11, 2003) – The Clark County Health District has secured a limited supply of flu vaccine and will begin offering the shot to persons at highest risk of severe complications from the flu. Three hundred doses will be offered on Monday, December 15, 2003, at the Ravenholt Public Health Center on 625 Shadow Lane. **The vaccine will be available by appointment only from 8 a.m. until 11 a.m.** Persons in the high-risk category may call 383-1351, 383-1352 and 383-1494 to schedule an appointment.

Based on the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the health district will offer the vaccine to:

- Healthy children age 6-23 months
- Adults age 65 years or older
- Pregnant women in their second or third trimester during influenza season
- Persons age 2 and older with underlying chronic conditions

Additionally, vaccine for children requiring a second dose will be available.

The health district is receiving small amounts of vaccine from a number of sources. As more vaccine is secured, the availability of appointments will be announced.

To date, the health district has received reports of seven culture-confirmed cases of influenza, fifty-three cases confirmed through rapid tests and no reported deaths.

Once the needs of the at-risk population have been met, vaccine will be offered to the general population if available. In the interim, the health district continues to advise people to take precautions to avoid spreading illness.

(more)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Protect Yourself and Others This Flu Season

How can I protect myself from the flu and other respiratory illnesses?

Germs spread through coughing and sneezing or unclean hands cause the flu and other respiratory illnesses such as respiratory syncytial virus and whooping cough. These illnesses spread easily in crowded places, including hospitals and clinic waiting rooms.

How can I prevent spreading germs if I am sick?

- Cover your nose and mouth with a disposable tissue every time you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a wastebasket with a plastic liner.
- After coughing or sneezing, always wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Do not share eating utensils, drinking glasses, towels or other personal items.
- Keep household surfaces clean.

What else can I do to stay healthy?

- Keep your hands away from your nose, eyes and mouth. Viruses are most likely to enter your body through these areas.
- Stop smoking. It irritates the lining in your nose, sinuses and lungs, which may make you susceptible to complications of the flu.
- Eat a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables.

- Get regular exercise.
- Drink plenty of water.

Will antibiotics or vitamins prevent the flu?

Taking antibiotics will not treat or prevent viral infections such as the flu. If a bacterial infection such as an ear or sinus infection develops after the flu, antibiotics might be helpful.

Large doses of vitamin C, or other vitamins and minerals will not prevent or treat the flu.

Do I need to see a doctor?

Most healthy people do not need to see a doctor for the flu. The illness usually goes away in about seven to 10 days. Although you may feel quite sick, home treatment is usually all that is needed.

You should see a health professional if:

- An infant under age 3 months has a fever of 100.4 F or higher.
- A child age 3 months to 3 years has a fever of 104 F or higher that does not come down after four to six hours of home treatment.
- A person age 4 or older has a fever of 104 F or higher that does not come down after two hours of home treatment.
- Your fever does not begin to go down after three to five days.
- You have a fever that goes away and then returns. (You could have a bacterial infection.)

(more)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- You or your child also has shortness of breath or other breathing problems.
- You or your child has a fever and a severe headache or stiff neck, or seems confused or hard to wake.
- A child who is ill and is not eating, taking fluids, or stops urinating, which can signify dehydration.

Is it a Cold or the Flu?

Colds and flu are both highly contagious, however, flu is a serious illness that can have life-threatening complications, unlike colds. Typically, colds begin slowly and a person will only experience mild illness. Signs of the flu include the sudden onset of symptoms, including a headache, dry cough and chills. Check this table for a comparison of typical symptoms for each illness.

For more information about the flu, or the availability of flu shots, call the Clark County Health District at 385-1291.

SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Fever	Rare	Characteristic, high (102-104 F); lasts 3-4 days
Headache	Rare	Prominent
General aches, pains	Slight	Usual, often severe
Fatigue, weakness	Quite mild	Can last up to 2-3 weeks
Extreme exhaustion	Never	Early and Prominent
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can become severe

(Source: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases)

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