



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RSA Tower 201 Monroe Street, Suite 914 Montgomery, AL 36104

Phone 334-206-5300 Fax 334-206-5534

www.adph.org

Influenza vaccine now available at county health departments

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Winkler Sims
(334) 206-5023
wsims@adph.state.al.us

Influenza vaccine is again available at all county health departments while supplies last. Persons who were unable to receive influenza immunizations earlier should contact their local health departments for information about immunization clinic schedules.

Two types of vaccine are available, an injectable form and an intranasal form. Wyeth Pharmaceuticals donated 5,000 doses of intranasal vaccine (trade-name FluMist) for healthy children and adults aged 5 through 49. FluMist is given with a small spray into each nostril rather than injected into the arm.

Injectable influenza vaccine is also available for other individuals, including those at higher risk of complications. The viruses in the flu shot are killed (inactivated), so people cannot get influenza by getting a flu shot. One of the injectable vaccines is recommended for children age 4 years and older, and another injectable vaccine is designed for use in infants age 6 months and older, children and adults.

Infection with influenza viruses can result in severe illness and life-threatening complications. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 10 to 20 percent of U.S. residents get the flu each year. An average of 114,000 people are hospitalized for flu-related complications and 36,000 Americans die each year from complications of flu.

Influenza season arrived earlier than usual in 2003, and its complications have led to the deaths of 93 children and thousands of adults in the U.S. It appears the outbreak may be subsiding, but there is a chance a second wave of influenza may strike before the season ends.

This may be the last opportunity for many children and adults to be immunized against influenza this season. A second dose of vaccine is recommended for children who did not receive both doses earlier due to lack of vaccine. In addition, persons planning to travel to the Southern Hemisphere should seriously consider being immunized for influenza prior to departure.

Please contact your local county health department for information about vaccine availability and clinic times.

1/20/04