



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## Health department encourages influenza immunization

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Influenza immunization clinics are scheduled throughout the state beginning in October through the end of the influenza season. County health departments and other health care providers in Alabama expect to have plenty of influenza vaccine for the 2007-2008 season. Annual influenza immunization is recommended for most people, beginning for children at age 6 months to protect against outbreaks which generally occur from November to March in Alabama.

“We anticipate having a sufficient supply of vaccine this season, and we encourage you to contact your physician or local health department to be immunized,” Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer, said. “On average, 200,000 people are hospitalized and approximately 36,000 people die each year in the United States from complications associated with influenza.”

Typical symptoms of the flu include fever and respiratory symptoms such as cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches, and often extreme fatigue. The public is also reminded to follow basic infection control measures to help prevent the spread of the flu. These include covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or cloth when coughing and sneezing, staying at home when sick, and washing hands frequently.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there are some people who should not be vaccinated without first consulting a physician. These include

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs.
- People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination in the past.
- People who developed Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) within six weeks of getting an influenza vaccine previously.
- Children less than 6 months of age.
- People who have a moderate or severe illness with a fever. These persons should wait to get vaccinated until their symptoms lessen.

Contact your private physician or your local county health department for a flu clinic schedule.

A county health department influenza clinic schedule also can be accessed on the Alabama Department of Public Health Web site at [www.adph.org/immunization](http://www.adph.org/immunization) or by calling the Immunization Division at (334) 206-5023 or toll free at 800-469-4599.

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