



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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**It's not too late; get your flu shot now**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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The Alabama Department of Public Health encourages the public to get their flu shots. Contact your local health care provider or county health department to ask about influenza vaccination.

“An ample supply of influenza vaccine remains available this season,” said Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer. “Influenza usually peaks during the months of January and February in Alabama, so it’s not too late to be immunized. It is also important to be protected from influenza during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. So contact your health care provider today.”

Influenza is more dangerous than the common cold for children. Each year, flu places a large burden on the health and well-being of children and families.

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. People with influenza can potentially infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to 5 days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stresses the importance of certain high- risk groups getting vaccinated. Those groups include:

- Children aged 6 months--18 years, including those on long-term aspirin therapy and those with conditions that place them at increased risk for complications from influenza
- Adults aged 50 years and older
- Adults and children with chronic disorders
- Women who will be pregnant during the influenza season
- Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities

- Persons who are immunosuppressed
- Healthcare workers
- Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged 0-59 months and adults ages 50 and older
- Anyone else who wishes to reduce the chance of contracting influenza

Please contact your private physician or your local county health department for an appointment or a schedule of flu clinics. For additional information contact the Immunization Division at (334) 205-5023 or toll free at 1-800-469-4599.

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