



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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CDPH Urges Immunization Against Flu, New Vaccines Offered

SACRAMENTO – Dr. Ron Chapman, state health officer and director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), today urged Californians who want protection from the flu to get immunized in order to prevent sickness, hospitalization and health complications resulting from the flu.

"Thousands of serious illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths can be prevented if Californians receive a flu vaccine as soon as possible," Chapman said. "We can't predict exactly when flu will arrive, but getting vaccinated now will help you and your family stay healthy when that time comes."

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and CDPH recommend for anyone 6 months of age and older to get a flu vaccine. The flu vaccine is effective and safe.

This year, there are many types of flu vaccinations that may be offered. The most common vaccine is made from three influenza viruses (two A and a B). Newly available are 'quadrivalent' formulations that contain the same three viruses and an additional B virus which sometimes circulates in the United States.

"Even if you were vaccinated against the flu last year, you will need a new vaccine this year," said Dr. Chapman. "Check with your health care provider if you have questions about your vaccine options."

CDC estimates that every year, more than 200,000 in the United States are hospitalized and flu-associated deaths range from a low of about 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people. Influenza, also called the flu, is a respiratory infection caused by a virus. The flu begins with an abrupt onset of fever, muscle aches, sore throat and cough that often make people sick enough to keep them in bed for several days. Flu can be especially dangerous for young children, seniors, pregnant women and people with chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes or asthma.

In addition to getting vaccinated against flu, Chapman encouraged Californians to stop the spread of influenza and other respiratory illnesses by taking the following additional basic steps:

- Stay home when you are sick to avoid spreading illness to co-workers and friends.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and properly dispose of used tissues.

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to get rid of most germs and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water and getting adequate rest and exercise.

Chapman also reminded parents and caregivers to use acetaminophen or ibuprofen instead of aspirin when treating fever and aches in children and teenagers. Aspirin has been linked to Reye's syndrome, a rare childhood disease which can lead to coma, brain damage and even death.

For information about low- and no-cost flu vaccines, consumers should contact their [local health department](#). For more information about the flu, visit [CDPH's Immunization Branch](#) Website.

To find a flu clinic, visit [Health Map Vaccine Finder](#).

www.cdph.ca.gov

