

## Deschutes County encourages citizens to get flu shots

by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources

Don't let the flu bug get you this year; it's not too late to protect you and your family members, Deschutes County Health Department's Shannon Dames reminds citizens. "Locally, there is plenty of flu vaccine available and residents are encouraged to get their flu (influenza) shot this month," she said.

Locally, the region's flu season is yet to peak, and there is still vaccine left to help those who haven't been vaccinated. Get your flu shot this month, make sure you and family members don't suffer the possible consequences of getting the flu (lost work, illness, and sometimes death) by thinking ahead and getting your vaccination now. February and March are often peak months for the virus, which makes January a great month to get prepared.

Each flu season is unique, but it is estimated that on average, approximately 5 to 20-percent of U.S. residents get the flu. More than 200,000 people are hospitalized each year for flu-related complications and about 36,000 Americans die on average, per year from flu complications.

Flu vaccination is recommended for people, including school-age children, who want to reduce the likelihood of becoming ill with influenza or transmitting the flu to others.

Groups recommended to receive influenza vaccine are:

1. Children aged 6-59 months
2. All persons 50 and older
3. Household contacts (including children) and caregivers of infants younger than six months
4. Children and adolescents on long-term aspirin therapy
5. Pregnant women
6. Adults and children who have chronic diseases

7. Immune suppressed adults and children

8. Adults and children with conditions that can compromise respiratory function

9. Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities.

To schedule an appointment for a flu shot at the Deschutes County Health Department, please call 322-7400.

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