

Department of Health, community leaders urge residents to vaccinate against flu

Written by Gallupsun Staff
Friday, 01 November 2019 10:34



Staff Reports

Last flu season, more than two hundred New Mexicans died of flu and flu-related pneumonia during 2018-2019 season.

“Flu can be fatal if left untreated or if a person at any age, has a weakened immune system,” New Mexico Department of Health Cabinet Secretary Secretary Kathy Kunkel said. “Getting your flu vaccination every year is the single best way to protect you[rself], your family, and our state’s most vulnerable residents, from infants to the elderly.”

The Department of Health recommends that everyone six months of age and older get a flu vaccine each flu season. The following groups of people are strongly recommended to be vaccinated because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications, or because they live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications:

- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old. Children aged 6

Department of Health, community leaders urge residents to vaccinate against flu

Written by Gallupsun Staff

Friday, 01 November 2019 10:34

months through 8 years who have never been vaccinated against influenza, or have an unknown vaccination history, should receive two doses of influenza vaccine, administered at least four weeks apart

- Pregnant women (all trimesters), and up to two weeks postpartum
- People ages 50 years and older
- People of any age with medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, lung or heart disease, and those who are immunocompromised
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including healthcare personnel and caregivers of babies younger than six months
- American Indians and Alaskan Natives
- People who are morbidly obese

People in these groups should also consider seeing their healthcare provider as early as possible to be evaluated for antiviral medication if they develop flu symptoms because the sooner these medications are begun, the better the chance of preventing serious complications. People who have the flu may have some or all of the following symptoms:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)

Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

Department of Health, community leaders urge residents to vaccinate against flu

Written by Gallupsun Staff

Friday, 01 November 2019 10:34

Remember that to avoid catching the flu or passing it on to others, everyone should wash their hands frequently, cover their mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, and stay home when ill.

NMDOH offers vaccinations for people without insurance or who are otherwise not able to get vaccinated. Those with Medicaid or other insurance who go to their local Public Health Offices are asked to bring their insurance card or contact their healthcare provider or pharmacist about getting a flu vaccine.

To find a flu vaccination event near you, and other flu-related information see the Department of Health Influenza Vaccinations webpage and the Frequently Asked Flu Questions page.