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DOH-OKALOOSA REMINDS YOU TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS THIS FLU SEASON



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Okaloosa County, Fla. – In Florida and throughout the U.S., flu activity is on the rise. In Okaloosa, we are currently seeing widespread flu activity. “On Friday, Jan. 12, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) stated that flu has reached epidemic levels and the nation has experienced 20 pediatric deaths,” stated Dr. Karen Chapman, Director of DOH-Okaloosa. “We have ordered additional flu vaccine for children for the Crestview and Fort Walton Beach clinics.”

DOH Okaloosa is urging residents to get your flu vaccine now if you have not already. **If any local pediatricians have children 18 or under that need an influenza vaccine, they can also send them to DOH-Okaloosa.** There are still weeks of flu activity to come. It is not too late to get your flu vaccine. The flu vaccine is safe, and recommended for everyone six months and older, including pregnant women.

Flu vaccines can vary in effectiveness from season to season, but they continue to be the best way to prevent influenza infection and serious influenza complications. To locate a flu shot near you, contact your health care provider or use DOH’s flu shot locator: www.flhealth.gov/findaflushot. **Call 850-833-9246 to make an appointment at DOH-Okaloosa.**

If you become ill with flu-like symptoms, contact your health care provider as soon as possible. Your health care provider can prescribe antiviral treatment if appropriate. Treatment is most effective when started within 48 hours, so calling as soon as you become ill is important, especially if you or your loved one is at a higher risk for complications: children younger than 5, adults over the age of 65, pregnant women, and those with underlying medical conditions.

Stay home from work and keep children home from school or daycare when sick to help prevent spreading the flu to others. It is also essential to practice good hygiene by [properly and frequently washing your hands](#). Make it a habit to clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces in your home, school or office. You can take additional steps to ward off the flu by coughing or sneezing into a tissue or your elbow and avoiding touching your face.

Visit FluFreeFlorida.com for more information on how you can be a part of #FluFreeFlorida. Visit www.floridahealth.gov/floridaflu for more information on influenza and influenza-like illness in Florida.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote, and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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