

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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San Mateo County Opens Flu Vaccination Clinics on December 4 and 9 to Residents of All Ages

SAN MATEO, Calif. — This flu season, an ample amount of influenza vaccine is available for San Mateo County residents. The County is holding two special flu vaccination clinics on December 4 and 9, and inviting adults, including pregnant women, and children 6 months and older to get immunized before the flu season begins. In addition to the usual flu shots, nasal-spray flu vaccine will be available for healthy people 2 to 49 years of age who are not pregnant. The clinic on December 4 will be held from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at St. Anthony's Church at 3500 Middlefield Road in Redwood City. The clinic on December 9 will be held from 9 to 10:30 a.m. at the San Mateo Senior Center at 2645 Alameda de las Pulgas in San Mateo. No appointment is necessary. Medicare is not accepted. A donation of \$5 is requested, but no one will be turned away because of their inability to pay.

Typically, County-sponsored clinics are restricted to persons 60 years of age and older and other adults with chronic medical conditions. The County decided to open these flu vaccination clinics to all residents in celebration of National Influenza Vaccination Week (December 8 -14).

“Vaccination is still the number one way to prevent the spread of the flu” said Dr. Karen Relucio, Assistant Health Officer. “Aside from preserving a person's ability to work, go to school, care for loved ones or enjoy fun activities, the flu vaccine can also help prevent some serious complications related to the flu, such as pneumonia.”

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Anyone who wants to be protected from the flu should get vaccinated. It is especially important that anyone in the following high risk groups get their annual flu vaccine: those with chronic illnesses (such as diabetes, asthma, heart disease), children aged 6 months to 5 years of age, pregnant women, residents of long-term care facilities or nursing homes, and people over 50 years of age. In addition, people in contact with high-risk groups, such as health care workers, caregivers, child care providers, household members, and all children up to age 18 should also get vaccinated.

Flu season usually peaks in February or later, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, up to one in five Americans is infected with the influenza virus each year. Of those infected, about 35,000 die and more than 225,000 are hospitalized because of influenza and disease complications annually.

County-sponsored clinics for seniors and adults with chronic health conditions continue through December 20. To get a complete schedule, visit www.smhealth.org/flu or call the flu clinic hotline at (650) 573-3927. Flu vaccine is also available at many convenient locations, including your private doctor's office, community health centers, pharmacies, and your local health department. For more information about where to get a flu vaccine, you can check www.flucliniclocator.org. Most health plans, including Medicare and Medi-cal, cover flu vaccine.

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