



Press Release
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It's Not Too Late to Protect Yourself Against the Flu

Annual vaccination is the best way to protect yourself against the influenza virus.

KNOX CITY, Texas (Dec 1 2021) – The holiday season is upon us, which means you will likely be spending more time with friends and loved ones over the next several weeks. With gatherings comes more opportunities for spreading the flu and other respiratory viruses, such as COVID-19.

National Influenza Vaccination Week is Dec. 5-11, 2021, providing everyone with an important reminder to get your annual flu vaccination if you have not yet done so.

“While October is the ideal month for flu shots, to allow time for your body to build immunity before the height of the flu season,” explains Dr. Laura Hart, physician in Knox County. “What is most important is that you eventually get vaccinated.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), flu activity during the 2020-2021 season was very low due to pandemic-related face coverings and social distancing measures. With this year’s holiday season looking more normal than last year, the CDC anticipates this year’s flu season to pan out much differently.

So how can you protect yourself and your loved ones during this year’s holiday gatherings? The CDC recommends that everyone six months and older get vaccinated.

It is estimated that half of the adults, ages 18 to 64, with at least one chronic health condition received a flu vaccine last season. This means that many individuals who are most vulnerable to getting very sick with the flu are not getting the protection they need.

“Flu vaccines are needed each year because flu viruses are constantly changing,” Dr. Hart adds. “It is because of this that vaccinations are reviewed each year and updated as appropriate to better match flu viruses that are expected to spread in the U.S. this season.”

This year, flu vaccines in the U.S. are quadrivalent (four-component), meaning they are designed to protect against the four flu viruses that research indicates are most likely to spread.

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According to health officials, it is possible to become sick with both the flu and COVID-19 at the same time. Both viruses are contagious respiratory illnesses, but different types of viruses cause them.

COVID-19 is caused by infection with a coronavirus, and seasonal flu is caused by infection with many influenza viruses that spread annually. Some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, making it hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone.

Unlike the flu, COVID-19 can cause loss of sense of taste or smell. However, other symptoms of the two illnesses can be similar. Symptoms can include fever, chills, coughing, and muscle and body aches. Diagnostic testing is needed to determine which type of virus you have.

It is still possible for someone who has gotten the flu shot to contract the virus, although symptoms in such cases are typically less severe than those who have not been vaccinated.

Wearing face masks and physical distancing can help protect you and others from respiratory viruses like flu and COVID-19. The best way to reduce your risk of flu illness and its potentially serious complications is to get a flu vaccine each year for everyone six months and older.

Medicare and most private insurance plans cover the annual flu shot, and a self-pay option is available for only \$25. COVID-19 vaccines are available free of charge regardless of insurance coverage. For more information about vaccines and scheduling an appointment to get vaccinated, please call the Knox City Clinic at 940-657-3906 or the Munday Clinic at 940-422-5271.

About Knox County Hospital District

Founded in 1926, Knox County Hospital District provides healthcare for residents of Knox County and surrounding areas. The district offers many medical services, including 24-hour emergency care, advanced radiology services, a clinical laboratory, home health, physical therapy, long-term care, patient education, and more. For additional information, please call 940-657-3535 or visit www.knoxhospital.org.

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