WCCHD Reminds It’s Not Too Late for Your Annual Flu Shot

National Influenza Vaccination Week (December 1-7) highlights the importance of continuing flu vaccination through the holiday season and beyond. The flu can be a serious health concern for older people, young children, pregnant women, and people with ongoing illnesses like diabetes, or kidney, heart, or lung disease.

While most healthy people recover from the flu, it can be passed to others around you who might not be so lucky. Every year, influenza sickens hundreds of thousands of people, sending them to the hospital. A record number of U.S. patients died from flu during the 2017-18 season, with 80,000 deaths recorded according to the CDC.

Even though handwashing and avoiding sick people are good habits, it is not enough to prevent the flu. Flu germs spread through the air through coughing, sneezing, or talking. You can make others sick days before you start to feel sick, and up to a week after you become sick.

There is still time to get the shot for protection throughout the entire flu season, which can last until May. “Getting the flu vaccine reduces the probability and severity of infection and the probability of transmitting the virus to others,” says Dr. Lori Palazzo, Medical Director and Health Authority for the Williamson County and Cities Health District. “Getting a flu vaccine is simple, and it’s the most important thing you can do to protect yourself, your family, and those that cannot get the vaccine, from flu.”

Free flu shots are available for uninsured Williamson County residents six months of age or older and all TVFC-eligible, CHIP Medicaid recipients (please bring shot records). No one will be denied services if they are unable to pay. Appointments are needed - please visit your public health department website at www.wcchd.org or call 512-248-3252.