



WILLIAMSON COUNTY AND CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Williamson County and Cities Health District Encourages Flu Vaccination for Adults and Children

January 26, 2011 (Williamson County) –

County health officials have noted an increase in reported flu and flu-like illnesses in Williamson County. Although flu vaccinations are recommended before flu season begins or early in the season, the current flu season has yet to peak. Flu season continues through April, and a flu vaccination now will help protect you for the remainder of the season.

Anyone who has the flu may be at risk for serious complications. Vaccination is the best way to prevent the flu and its severe complications.

The very young, the very old, those with long-term (chronic) diseases, or with weak immune systems are more likely to be hospitalized related to complications of the flu. Flu is more likely to cause severe illness in pregnant women than in women who are not pregnant. Changes in the immune system, heart, and lungs during pregnancy make pregnant women more prone to severe illness from flu as well as hospitalizations and even death.

Caregivers may not think about the need for children to receive a flu vaccination. Influenza (flu) can strike anyone at any age. Children with flu feel miserable, often miss school, and can spread the disease to family members and others who are not vaccinated. Williamson County and Cities Health District (WCCHD) encourages caregivers to get their children vaccinated against the flu. WCCHD recommends that you check with your child's regular medical provider or the health district if you have any specific concerns about your child receiving the flu vaccine.

WCCHD is providing flu shots and flu mist to children who qualify for the Texas Vaccine for Children's (TVFC) Program. Flu vaccinations are available at all four WCCHD public health centers (Cedar Park, Georgetown, Round Rock, Taylor) for children ages 6 months

to 18 years who are uninsured or underinsured (includes those children who are on Medicaid and CHIP, have insurance that does not pay for vaccines, or has a co-pay or deductible the family cannot meet, or has insurance that provides limited wellness or prevention coverage) and fit the requirements for TVFC flu vaccine.

The cost of the TVFC flu vaccine is based on family income and is no more than \$10.00 per child. No child will be denied a flu vaccination if the parent is not able to pay the fee. WCCHD recommends that you call the clinic before seeking a flu vaccination for your child to ensure vaccine availability.

WCCHD also has vaccine available for adults. The cost of flu vaccine for adults is \$20.00.

For information on WCCHD public health center hours, the TVFC program, fees, and flu vaccination recommendations for children and adults, please visit our website at:

<http://www.wcchd.org/Services/HealthServices/FluShotInfo.htm>

For general information about *your public health department* visit www.wcchd.org.