

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW RIVER HEALTH DISTRICT SCHEDULES FREE, DRIVE-THROUGH FLU CLINICS FOR ADULTS, OCTOBER 29

(CHRISTIANSBURG, Virginia) – The New River Health District is kicking-off the 2010 influenza vaccination season with drive-through dispensing clinics FOR ADULTS ONLY (age 18 and over) on Friday, October 29, from 9 a.m. until noon, at the Montgomery County Health Department, 210 S. Pepper St., Christiansburg, and at Randolph Park, 5100 Alexander Rd., Dublin. Because these drive-through dispensing clinics are a required Virginia Department of Health Office of Emergency Preparedness exercise, the vaccine is FREE! The vaccine will be available in both nasal mist and injectable forms.

Those who wish to obtain the vaccine at the Montgomery County Health Department must enter Pepper St. from Franklin St. next to the Christiansburg Church of the Brethren (the drive-through clinic cannot be accessed from First St.). Those obtaining vaccine at Randolph Park should enter the park at the main entrance to be directed to the drive-through clinic.

In previous years, this unique approach has proven a fast and efficient way to serve the needs of many adult residents of the New River Valley. It is important that persons wishing to receive the vaccination wear clothing that is loose around the arms so that the flu shot may be easily given in the upper arm by a public health nurse in the convenience of one's car.

Influenza, commonly called "the flu," is a serious disease caused by the influenza virus that affects the respiratory tract. It is highly contagious (the virus can be transmitted even before flu-like symptoms appear) and generally spreads from person-to-person when an infected person coughs or sneezes. A person usually becomes sick one to three days following exposure to the virus. Typical flu symptoms include fever, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches, and extreme fatigue. The influenza season in southwest Virginia usually peaks in January and February. Influenza is associated with estimated annual averages of approximately 36,000 deaths and approximately 226,000 hospitalizations in the United States.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's new recommendations for 2010 indicate that all persons six months of age or older should be vaccinated annually. Annual vaccination is especially recommended for the following high-risk groups:

- Persons at high risk for complications from the flu, including:
 - Children aged six to 59 months of age;
 - Pregnant women;
 - People 50 years of age and older;

(More)

- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions, and
- People who live in nursing homes and other long term care facilities.
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including:
 - Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu (see above);
 - Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than six months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated); and
 - Health care workers.

Vaccination is the best way to prevent influenza, and its potentially severe complications. This drive-through influenza vaccine clinic will be held rain or shine.

For more information, call the New River Health District at 540-381-7100 or visit www.vdh.virginia.gov.

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