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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

News Release: #2013-016

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PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO TAKE ACTION NOW TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AND OTHERS AGAINST SEASONAL INFLUENZA NEW INFLUENZA VACCINE OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE THIS YEAR

STOCKTON, CA (November 20, 2013). The 2013 -14 Influenza Season has begun and health officials are seeing an increase in flu activity. San Joaquin County Health Officer Dr. Karen Furst urges, "All those who have not done so already, should get their annual influenza or "flu" vaccine now; don't wait to vaccinate and protect yourself and your family against influenza this year." Keep in mind, it takes up to two weeks after vaccination for full immunity to take effect and winter holiday activities and gatherings are prime opportunities for flu viruses to spread.

History shows us that flu seasons are unpredictable in many ways, especially when it will start, how long it will last and how severe it will be. "But what is known is that every year, people can, and do, get very sick from the influenza virus, even those who are healthy," cautions Dr. Furst. Health officials recommend that the single best way to prevent the flu is for everyone 6 months and older to get the annual influenza vaccine. Getting the flu vaccine now will provide protection for the full season.

The flu is an infection of the respiratory system that causes fever, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, chills, fatigue and body aches. Most people who get the flu can treat their symptoms at home with rest and medication. But some, including young children, the elderly, pregnant women and those with chronic medical conditions and weakened immune systems may be more vulnerable and at higher risk of developing flu-related complications (e.g., pneumonia), that can lead to hospitalization or even death. Vaccination is also important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for people at higher risk for influenza-related complications.

While there are many different influenza viruses, the flu vaccine protects against the strains of influenza that research suggests will be most common each year. The different influenza vaccines target various age groups from 6 months and older; they are safe, effective, and available now. There are two primary ways to get flu vaccine: the flu shot and the nasal spray. For the 2013-2014 flu season, traditional flu vaccines made to protect against three different flu viruses (called "trivalent" vaccines) are available. In addition, new flu vaccines made to protect against four different flu viruses (called "quadrivalent" vaccines) also are available.

Public health officials do not recommend one flu vaccine over the other. Your healthcare provider can help determine which flu vaccine is right for you and your family based on age, allergies and health conditions.

THE VARIOUS FLU VACCINE OPTIONS FOR THE 2013-2014 FLU SEASON INCLUDE:

- **The trivalent flu vaccine** protects against two influenza A viruses and an influenza B virus. The following trivalent flu vaccines are available:
 - [Standard dose trivalent shots](#) that are manufactured using virus grown in eggs. These are approved for people ages 6 months and older.
 - A standard dose [trivalent shot containing virus grown in cell culture](#), which is approved for people 18 and older.
 - A standard dose [trivalent shot that is egg-free](#), approved for people 18 through 49 years of age.
 - A [high-dose trivalent shot](#), approved for people 65 and older.
 - A standard dose [intradermal trivalent shot](#), which is injected into the skin instead of the muscle and uses a much smaller needle than the regular flu shot, approved for people 18 through 64 years of age.
- **The quadrivalent flu vaccine** protects against two influenza A viruses and two influenza B viruses. The following quadrivalent flu vaccines are available:
 - A standard dose quadrivalent shot.
 - A [standard dose quadrivalent flu vaccine, given as a nasal spray](#), approved for healthy people, 2 through 49 years of age who are not pregnant and who do not have chronic illnesses.

Besides doctor's offices, seasonal influenza vaccines are offered in many locations including clinics, neighborhood pharmacies, college health centers, public health departments, many employers, and even some schools. To find immunization clinic sites that are convenient for you, log onto www.flu.gov and use the *Flu Vaccine Finder*.

San Joaquin County Public Health Services provides flu vaccine during its regular immunization clinic hours, for people of all ages who do not have a regular source of medical care that provides influenza vaccine. The fee is \$17; however, no one will be denied services due to inability to pay. Please call 1-800-839-4949 or visit www.sjcphs.org for clinic days and hours.

To further decrease the risk of getting sick or spreading germs, take these everyday preventive steps: wash your hands often with soap and warm water; avoid touching your face and eyes; cover your cough; stay home from work and school if you're sick; and, stay away from those who are ill.

For more information about seasonal influenza and the benefits of vaccination, visit the following websites:

- California Department of Public Health Immunization Branch at [www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Influenza\(Flu\).aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Influenza(Flu).aspx)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/flu

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Attachment: Poster "Flu Season is here: Get Vaccinated Today"

Flu Season Is Here

Get Vaccinated Today

Who should get the vaccine?

EVERYONE 6 MONTHS AND OLDER

Everyone **6 MONTHS OF AGE AND OLDER** should get the flu vaccine. Seasonal flu vaccines have a very good safety track record.



PEOPLE AT HIGH RISK

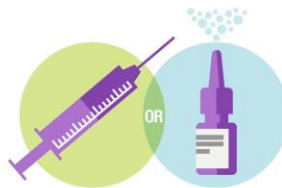
It is especially **IMPORTANT TO GET THE VACCINE IF YOU, SOMEONE YOU LIVE WITH, OR SOMEONE YOU CARE FOR IS AT HIGH RISK** of complications from the flu.

- ✓ Children & Infants
- ✓ Pregnant Women
- ✓ Seniors
- ✓ People with Disabilities
- ✓ People with Health Conditions
- ✓ Travelers & People Living Abroad

Can I get the flu from the vaccine?

NO, YOU CAN'T GET THE FLU

NO, YOU CAN'T GET THE FLU from the flu vaccine. The flu vaccine protects you from the flu, not the common cold. But you may experience some side effects.



MILD REACTIONS

MILD REACTIONS such as soreness, headaches, and fever are common side effects of the flu vaccine.



How should I get the vaccine?

There are **TWO TYPES** of vaccine, the flu shot and the nasal spray. Both protect against the same virus strains.

FLU SHOT



Made with inactivated (killed) flu virus



Given by needle



Approved for use in healthy people older than 6 months and people with chronic health conditions

NASAL SPRAY



Made with weakened live flu virus



Given with a mist sprayed in your nose



Approved for healthy people between the ages of 2 and 49, except pregnant women

When should I get the vaccine?



Get your flu shot or spray **TODAY**. Flu season usually peaks in January or February, but it can occur as late as May. **EARLY IMMUNIZATION IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE**, but it is not too late to get the vaccine in December, January or beyond.

Where can I get the vaccine?

Visit **FLU.GOV** and use the **FLU VACCINE FINDER**.

Flu Vaccine Finder Find flu clinics near you

Everyone six months of age and older needs a flu vaccine.

Enter Zip Code

powered by **HealthMap**

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