

February 8, 2018

## CLEARING UP FLU PREVENTION AND TREATMENT MYTHS FROM THE FLORIDA HEALTH IN BAY



### Contact:

Heather Kretzer  
Heather.Kretzer@FLHealth.gov  
850-252-9670

### Get vaccinated today!

For those who have still not received a flu shot this year, it's not too late! Annual vaccinations are safe and provide protection for each flu season. Getting vaccinated helps protect you and your loved ones. Getting vaccinated yourself also protects people around you, including those who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people, and people with certain underlying health conditions.

Children need to be vaccinated as well. Last week, 52% of reported outbreaks were in daycare (17%) or school (35%) settings. Emergency department data from last week show that almost 20% of visits statewide are due to influenza-like illness in children less than 4 years old.

### Did you get a flu shot but still got the flu?

Although the flu shot may not have prevented infection, it can still prevent serious life threatening effects and length of the flu.

Flu vaccination not only protects the elderly but can also significantly reduce a child's risk of dying from influenza. A recent CDC [study](#) showed vaccination prevents deaths by half (51%) among children with underlying high-risk medical conditions and nearly two-thirds (65%) among healthy children. Sadly, all five pediatric flu deaths reported in Florida to date this year were in unvaccinated children.

Flu vaccination also may make illness milder if you do get sick. Another recent CDC [study](#) showed that flu vaccination reduced intensive care unit (ICU) admissions, ICU length of stay, and overall duration of hospitalization among hospitalized flu patients.

Antiviral drugs are a second line of defense to treat the flu if you get sick. There is an adequate supply of antivirals in Florida, although the CDC is aware of some areas where there are delays in receiving new shipments. DOH recommends that you call ahead to your pharmacy for medication availability.

Visit [FluFreeFlorida.com](http://FluFreeFlorida.com) for more information about the flu.

For the most current information about flu activity in Florida, please see [Florida's weekly surveillance report, the Florida Flu Review](#).

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov).