



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Greg Wagner
Acting Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

Flu season is almost here! Prepare by getting your flu shot

For Immediate Release

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SAN FRANCISCO (September 20, 2018) – The San Francisco Department of Public Health urges that everyone age six months and older should get their yearly flu shot (influenza vaccine) this fall. The flu vaccine protects everyone’s health – it prevents individuals from getting sick, limits the spread of flu from person to person, and reduces the chance of hospitalization.

“Getting a flu shot every year is the best protection we have against influenza virus,” said Dr. Juliet Stoltey, San Francisco Department of Public Health Communicable Disease Control and Prevention Director. “Protect yourself, your family and your community and get vaccinated.”

The flu season generally starts in November and lasts through April. The vaccine provides protection starting about 2 weeks after getting the shot. It is best to get the vaccine before the end of October, before the flu season begins. However for those unable to get the flu shot by then, getting the shot in November or later can still provide protection.

Common symptoms of the flu include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, with muscle or body aches, headaches, and fatigue. People who experience symptoms should stay home for at least 24 hours after their fever goes away to prevent spreading the infection to others.

Certain individuals are more likely to experience complications from the flu, including pregnant women, children younger than 5 years, adults 65 and older, and people with chronic medical conditions, such as heart disease, asthma, and diabetes. Protection against the flu is especially important for these individuals, and they should contact their health care provider if they develop flu symptoms. Medical providers may prescribe antiviral medications to reduce the severity and duration of illness. Anyone who is very sick should seek immediate medical attention.

Flu vaccines are widely available at doctors’ offices, clinics, and pharmacies, including the AITC Immunization & Travel Clinic at the San Francisco Department of Public Health (www.sfcdcp.org/aitc). To find a flu vaccine at a location near you, visit the [Vaccine Finder](#). For a list of San Francisco locations that offer free or low-cost flu vaccinations, visit <https://www.sfcdcp.org/immunizations/where-to-get-immunized>.



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In addition to getting the flu shot, help protect yourself and your loved ones by:

- coughing or sneezing into a tissue or your elbow or arm.
- washing your hands regularly with soap and water, or using an alcohol-based rub.
- avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- staying at home if you are sick.

For more information about influenza or flu vaccine, contact your health care provider or visit <https://www.sfdcp.org/infectious-diseases-a-to-z/d-to-k/influenza-flu/>.

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About San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH)

The mission of the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) is to protect and promote the health of all San Franciscans. SFDPH strives to achieve its mission through the work of two main divisions – the San Francisco Health Network and the Population Health Division. The San Francisco Health Network is a community of top-rated clinics, hospitals and programs that serves more than 100,000 people annually at sites such as Castro Mission, Chinatown, and Southeast health centers, Zuckerberg San Francisco General and Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center. With a broad community focus, the goal of the Population Health Division is to ensure that San Franciscans have optimal health and wellness at every stage of life. To achieve this, the Division is comprised of branches dedicated to core public health services, such as health protection and promotion, disease and injury prevention, disaster preparedness and response, and environmental health services.

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