



San Francisco Department of Public Health

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City and County of San Francisco
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Fight flu by getting your flu shot! *It's time to prepare yourself for the flu season*

For Immediate Release

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SAN FRANCISCO (October 18, 2018) – The San Francisco Department of Public Health urges everyone age six months and older to get their yearly influenza (flu) vaccine during this flu season. 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.

"The flu vaccine is the best form of protection against the influenza virus," said Dr. Juliet Stoltey, San Francisco Department of Public Health Communicable Disease Control and Prevention Director. "Getting vaccinated every year will help you, your family, and your community stay healthy."

The flu season generally starts in November and lasts through April. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for the body to build immunity against flu, so now is the time to get vaccinated to have protection during the flu season. Flu vaccinations are needed every year to maintain protection because the flu virus changes a bit each year and the vaccine is updated to match the changes.

Flu symptoms include fever, chills, fatigue, headache, body aches, cough, and sore throat. Many people with flu also have a runny or stuffy nose, but with flu, people feel sicker than with the common cold. People who experience symptoms should stay home for at least 24 hours after their fever goes away to prevent spreading the infection to others. A person with the flu may be contagious and infect others before they even feel sick.

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.

For a list of San Francisco locations that offer free or low-cost flu vaccinations, visit <https://www.sfdcdp.org/immunizations/where-to-get-immunized>. 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.sfdcdp.org/aitc). Visit



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[Vaccine Finder](#) to locate a flu shot provider near your location.

In addition to protecting yourself and your loved ones by getting the flu vaccine, help prevent the spread of flu by:

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

For more information about influenza or flu vaccine, contact your health care provider or visit <https://www.sfc-dcp.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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