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November 4, 2019

NEWS RELEASE

Flu Prevention Encouraged Ahead of Holiday Season

Department urges vaccination as flu season proves aggressive this year

EL PASO, TEXAS – The start of the 2019 flu season has already seen more than 50 cases of the virus, more than double the number compared to this time last season. Officials with the City of El Paso Department of Public Health are hoping an increase in the number of those receiving the flu vaccine will help prevent the trend from affecting more area residents.

“It is especially important that our community members receive the flu vaccine now, before the holidays roll around and we find ourselves in more close-contact social situations,” said Dr. Hector Ocaranza, El Paso Health Authority. “Keep in mind that it takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop and protect a person from the virus.”

In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that everyone six months of age and older receive the flu vaccine every year. Individuals over the age of 65, pregnant women, and those with underlying medical conditions such as asthma, heart disease, and weakened immune systems are considered to be at greatest risk for life-threatening flu complications.

The public is reminded that most insurances cover flu vaccines at little or no cost via primary healthcare providers or local retail outlets. The Department of Public Health’s Immunization Program offers low-cost vaccines for children who meet the state guidelines via their three clinics. Appointments can be made by calling (915) 212-6555. Adults who do not have insurance can also receive free vaccines at these clinics thanks to funding from the Medicaid Waiver Program.

Additionally, the Vaccinations for Health program with upcoming clinics taking place on Wednesday, November 6 at the EPFD Safety, Health & Outreach Center, at 5415 Trowbridge Dr. from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Saturday, November 9, at Fire Station 18, 7901 San Jose Rd. from 8 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

For more information on flu prevention and flu vaccines, please visit www.EPHealth.com or in Spanish at www.EPSalud.com.

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