



Public Health
Division

County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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Press Release

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FLU ACTIVITY IS INCREASING, AND IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO VACCINATE

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, CA – *Santa Cruz County Public Health Division Urges Influenza Vaccination*

On December 30, 2016, both the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced that influenza activity has been increasing, and is expected to continue to increase in coming weeks. Santa Cruz County is also experiencing an increase in influenza activity. The strain that has been circulating, influenza A (H3N2), is a component of this season's vaccine. In the past, H3N2-predominant seasons have been associated with more severe illness and higher mortality, especially in older people and young children compared to other influenza strains. Therefore, the Santa Cruz County Public Health Division urges people to get vaccinated.

Everyone ages 6 months and older, including pregnant women, should be vaccinated to prevent influenza illness and serious flu complications. Vaccination is especially important for people who are at high risk of serious flu-related complications, like young children and people 65 and older, pregnant women, and people with certain chronic medical conditions, like asthma, diabetes and heart disease. The benefits of flu vaccination include:

- Flu vaccination can keep you from getting sick with flu.
- Flu vaccination can reduce the risk of flu-associated hospitalization, including among children and older adults.
- Flu vaccination is an important preventive tool for people with chronic health conditions.
- Vaccination helps protect women during and after pregnancy. Getting vaccinated can also protect a baby after birth from flu.
- Flu vaccination also may make your illness milder if you do get sick.
- 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 chronic health conditions.

Along with getting immunized, other ways to prevent the spread of flu include:

- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough and sneezes
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth

Find a location for getting a flu vaccine near you, visit the [Vaccine Finder](#).

Stay healthy, Santa Cruz.

