

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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It's not too early to be vaccinated against flu

(Lawrence, KS) – Many providers are offering the flu vaccine earlier this year. The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department recommends that people receive the immunization at their earliest convenience.

It's not too early. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is no evidence to suggest that late-season outbreaks among vaccinated persons are attributed to waning immunity.

This year, the CDC recommends that everyone ages 6 months and older receive the flu vaccine. A flu shot not only protects you, but those around you, especially those people who can't receive the vaccine – such as infants less than six months of age.

This year's vaccination will include protection against H1N1, a new influenza virus that emerged last year. Because the flu shot is made of inactivated virus strains, your body can develop an immune response to the illness, but will not develop influenza.

The Health Department expects to have vaccine available later this month, based on supply.

Good health habits are also an important way to prevent influenza:

- *Wash your hands.*
Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
- *Cover coughs or sneezes.*
Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- *Stay home if you are sick.*
Stay home from work, school and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- *Avoid close contact.*
Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- *Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.*
Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is

contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

For more information, go to the Health Department's website at www.idchealth.org.

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