

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GET VACCINATED FOR FLU AT ANY LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT IN THE CRATER HEALTH DISTRICT

(PETERSBURG, Va.) – The Crater Health District is now offering flu vaccine to the public during immunization clinics. All local health departments in the health district accept Medicare, Medicaid, and some private insurance plans.

“Vaccination is the best way to prevent influenza and its potentially severe complications,” said, Donald R. Stern, M.D., M.P.H., acting director of the Crater Health District “The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Virginia Department of Health recommend that all persons age six months and older be vaccinated annually. The vaccine takes full effect within two weeks and its benefits last for up to a year.”

Influenza, commonly called “the flu,” is a serious disease caused by the influenza virus that affects the respiratory tract. It is highly contagious and generally spreads from person-to-person when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus can be transmitted even before flu-like symptoms appear. A person usually becomes sick one to three days following exposure to the virus. Typical flu symptoms include fever, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches, and extreme fatigue.

Each year in the U.S. approximately 200,000 people are hospitalized due to flu illness, and flu-related deaths range from 3,000 to 49,000 each year, averaging 24,000 per year over the last three decades.

To minimize your risk of contracting or transmitting the flu, follow these simple steps:

- Get vaccinated;
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly (20 seconds minimum);
- Cover your cough, either by using a disposable tissue or coughing into your sleeve, not your hand; and
- Stay at home when you are sick.

Call your local health department to find out when you can get a flu vaccination.

- Dinwiddie County Health Department, 14006 Boydton Plank Rd., Dinwiddie, 804-469-3771
- Greensville/Emporia Health Department, 140 Uriah Branch Way, Emporia, 434-348-4235
- Hopewell City Health Department, 220 Appomattox St., Hopewell, 804-458-1297
- Petersburg City Health Department, 301 Halifax St., Petersburg, 804-863-1652
- Prince George County Health Department, 6450 Administration Dr., Prince George, 804-733-2630
- Surry County Health Department, 474 Colonial Trail West., Surry, 757-294-3185
- Sussex County Health Department, 20103 Princeton Rd., Sussex, 804-246-8611

For more information, visit www.vdh.virginia.gov or call the Crater Health District at 804-863-1652.

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