

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bernice Bova RN, Public Health Nurse

It's Not Too Late—Stratford Offers Free Flu Clinic January 27, 2011

Stratford, Connecticut (January 10, 2011)—It's not too late to vaccinate against the flu. The Stratford Health Department has scheduled a FREE flu clinic on January 27, 2011 from 3 pm to 7 pm at its offices at 468 Birdseye Street in Stratford for ages 4 years and older.

Why get a flu shot this year? Bernice Bova, Stratford's Public Health Nursing Supervisor says, "So you don't get the flu, so you don't give it to a loved one who can't fight the flu as well as you can, so you don't spread the flu to co-workers, patients and people you meet through this winter." She adds that it will help protect you from getting the flu or lessen your symptoms and length of illness if you get the flu.

There are some myths circulating about becoming ill after receiving the flu shot. The flu shot CANNOT give you the flu, it is a dead (inactivated) virus. It is possible that you were exposed to a non-flu virus before or after you were vaccinated. The flu vaccine can only prevent illnesses caused by flu viruses. Another possibility is that you could have been exposed to the flu after you got vaccinated, but before your body had a chance to make the antibodies it needs to fight the flu. It takes about two weeks after you receive the vaccine for your body to build protection against the flu. The most common side effects from a flu shot are a sore arm and occasionally a low grade fever or achiness.

This year's flu shot and nasal spray vaccines have been a good match to the strains that have been reported to be active in our communities. It covers the new H1N1 strain we endured through last year, an H3N2 strain and a B strain.

Although the flu season began slowly it has now reached regional levels. Early reports coming in to the Department of Public Health (DPH) are indicating a higher number of H3N2 cases. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), over the last 20 or 25 years of influenza data in the United States, seasons in which H3N2 viruses predominate are generally associated with more deaths associated with pneumonia and influenza than seasons in which either H1 or B were the predominant viruses.

If you or your family becomes ill with the flu, please don't share it with others. Stay home and avoid contact with other people except to get medical care. [Those at increased risk for flu complications](#) include young children, people 65 and older, those with asthma or diabetes and women who are pregnant. Last year, during the H1N1 pandemic, we saw the flu attack children, young adults and new populations at high risk

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of serious flu-related complications, including those who were morbidly obese, Alaskan Natives, and American Indians.

If you are at risk, talk to a health care provider about whether you need to be examined if you get flu symptoms. It is possible for healthy people to develop severe illness from the flu so anyone concerned about their illness should consult a health care provider.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/flu or call Stratford Health Department at 203-385-4058.

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