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Department of Health Encourages People to Make Appointment for Flu Vaccine
Everyone Older than Six Months Should Get Vaccine This Year

(Santa Fe) – The New Mexico Department of Health is recommending that people start to make appointments now to get vaccinated against the flu. The Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that everyone older than six months get their flu vaccine to prevent against spreading the disease.

“Flu season is right around the corner and it is important to get a flu shot to help protect yourself, your family and the community from the disease,” said Department of Health Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Catherine Torres. “It is especially important for children to be vaccinated against the flu every year. I also advise everyone to follow good hand hygiene practices to help minimize the spread of the flu this season.”

New Mexicans should contact their health care providers to receive flu vaccine. The Department’s public health offices provide vaccines to people who are at high risk for serious illness or death and people who have no health insurance. Contact information for local public health offices is listed in the phonebook’s blue pages under state government or online at www.nmhealth.org.

While everyone should get a flu vaccine each flu season, it's especially important that people in the following groups get vaccinated, either because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications or because they live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications:

- Pregnant women
- Children younger than five, but especially children younger than two years old
- People age 65 and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, and lung or heart disease
- People who live in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including health care workers and caregivers for babies younger than 6 months
- American Indians and Alaskan Natives, who last flu season seemed to be at higher risk of flu complications
- People who are morbidly obese



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To avoid catching the flu or passing it on to others, people should frequently wash their hands, cover their mouth and nose when sneezing and coughing, and stay home when ill.

Many of the people at high risk for flu complications should also get a pneumonia shot if they have never had one. People who need to have the pneumococcal vaccine are: age 65 and older, and adults 19 and older who smoke or have chronic health conditions, such as: asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular or lung disease, cirrhosis, chronic renal failure or who are immunocompromised due to lymphoma, organ transplant, multiple myeloma or Hodgkin's disease.

As the flu season progresses, you can find information about the flu and flu clinics by calling toll-free at 866-681-5872 or by visiting the Department of Health's website at <http://www.immunizenm.org/flu.shtml>. More clinics will be scheduled later in the season.

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