



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Get the Flu Shot to Keep Yourself—and San Luis Obispo County—Healthy**

San Luis Obispo — The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department urges residents to protect themselves and the community by getting the flu shot. The 2017-18 vaccine is now available nationwide and in San Luis Obispo County. It is recommended for everyone over six months of age.

"By protecting yourself with the flu shot, you reduce your own chances of getting sick and also do something more," said Dr. Penny Borenstein, Health Officer of the County of San Luis Obispo. "You reduce the amount of flu virus circulating in our community and thereby protect your family, friends, co-workers and people you may never meet. It's the right thing to do."

Seasonal flu can begin as early as October and continue as late as May. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people get vaccinated by the end of October or earlier, if possible. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body that protect against flu virus infection. The vaccine is updated each year to better match the viruses in circulation. This year, the recommended version is a flu shot, not a nasal spray.

Flu symptoms range from well-known fever, body aches and cough to serious and even deadly complications such as pneumonia. Flu can be especially dangerous for young children, older adults, and people with certain chronic health conditions such as asthma, heart disease and diabetes. CDC estimates that each year since 2010, flu has caused between 9.2 million and 35.6 million illnesses and between 140,000 and 710,000 hospitalizations in the U.S. By getting the flu shot, you can:

- **Protect yourself.** The flu shot reduces your chances of getting sick from the influenza virus. While the degree varies by year, it always offers an important degree of protection.
- **Protect your family, friends, co-workers and community.** By reducing your own risk, you also reduce the risk of spreading the virus to others—including people vulnerable to serious complications. Multiplied across the County, this effect can be profound.
- **Protect the local workforce.** The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) estimates flu causes U.S. workers to miss up to 111 million workdays per year. Preventing flu helps reduce the burden of illness on the local economy.

You can get the flu shot in SLO County from:

- Your regular healthcare provider
- Many local pharmacies
- [Public Health Department clinics](#), by appointment

Find locations that offer the flu shot at [VaccineFinder.org](#). More information about the flu and flu vaccine is available at [www.cdc.gov/flu](#).

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