



MEDIA RELEASE

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Knox County Health Department offers free influenza vaccinations *Encourages vaccination and adherence to general infection control measures*

Knoxville, Tenn. – Influenza activity has increased over the past month, and it is expected to continue in the coming weeks. To help protect the community, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) will offer free flu vaccinations beginning today, Tuesday, Jan. 24, while supplies last.

“If you haven’t had a flu vaccine this season, it’s not too late,” said KCHD Director of Clinical Services Dr. Kelly Cooper. “In fact, the CDC recommends flu vaccination as long as the virus is circulating in the community. And, vaccination is still the best protection available from this virus and its potentially serious complications.”

Free flu vaccinations are available at KCHD’s main location, 140 Dameron Ave.; the West Clinic, 1028 Old Cedar Bluff Rd.; and Teague Clinic, 405 Dante Rd. Appointments can be made by calling 865-215-5070. In addition to vaccination, it’s important for the public to:

- **Wash hands well and often** by scrubbing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Influenza can be spread by touching surfaces that are contaminated with the virus and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes.** Most respiratory illnesses can be spread to others up to six feet away.
- **Stay home if sick and keep children home if they are.** Stay home at least 24 hours after the fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
- **Don’t visit the elderly, children or those with chronic health conditions if you’re sick.**

Vaccination and the above steps are particularly important for those with a higher risk for complications, including children younger than 5, and especially those under 2; people age 65 and older; pregnant women; and people with certain chronic conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and asthma. Symptoms of influenza can include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, runny nose, tiredness, diarrhea and vomiting. Those with a high risk for complications should see their health care provider if they experience any of these symptoms. Antiviral drugs may be prescribed and can reduce the severity and duration of illness. Treatment with antivirals works best when started within 48 hours of the beginning of symptoms.

About Knox County Health Department:

The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is a governmental agency dedicated to making every person a healthy person. As the first health department in Tennessee to achieve national accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, KCHD’s mission is to encourage, promote and assure the development of an active, healthy community through innovative public health practices. The organization conducts disease surveillance, prevention and control; emergency preparedness; nutrition and physical activity promotion; tobacco use prevention; health equity promotion; immunizations; and much more. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

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