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PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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If you can't get a flu shot, you can still fight the flu

The Pinellas County Health Department reports that it has depleted its shipment of influenza vaccine for this flu season. At this time, additional flu shots are NOT expected at the health department.

If you were unable to get a flu shot, getting a pneumonia shot may protect you against this potential serious complication of the flu. It's a one-time shot for anyone 65 or older. Younger people with heart and lung diseases, diabetes or weak immune systems need it, too. Check with your healthcare provider to find out if a pneumonia vaccine is advised for you. The Pinellas County Health Department DOES have pneumonia vaccine available.

While there are no guarantees, there are also some important things you can do to reduce your chances of becoming ill with influenza and other respiratory illness all year round.

- Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available. Make sure your children get in the habit of washing their hands, too. Hand washing is one of the most important things you can do to protect yourself from illness.
- Eat right, exercise and learn to manage stress. If you are in generally good health, your immune system is better able to fight off illnesses.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Stay home when you are sick. Keeping your distance from others will protect them from getting sick, too. If your children are sick, keep them home from school.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

These practices can at least reduce the spread of colds and the flu and reduce your risk of developing more serious complications like pneumonia. For more information about fighting the flu, visit www.cdc.gov.

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The mission of the Pinellas County Health Department is to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of residents and visitors through public and private community efforts.
www.PinellasHealth.com