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# CLEVELAND COUNTY

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## PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 28, 2021**

### **Flu Vaccine Available at Cleveland County Health Department Beginning October 4**

SHELBY, NC – September 28, 2021 – The Cleveland County Health Department joins the NC Division of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in urging everyone to protect themselves by getting vaccinated against the flu. Everyone over the age of 6 months is encouraged to be immunized.

It is not too early. The vaccine is safe and effective and the best way to protect yourself and your family from getting the flu.

In addition to vaccination, continue practicing healthy habits to protect yourself from flu viruses:

- Cover your nose and mouth with tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw the tissue in the trash promptly after use.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Stay home if you are sick. You should stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone and other symptoms have improved, except to get medical care.

“Steps to prevent the flu are very similar to the steps we encourage individuals to take to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including getting vaccinated,” said DeShay Oliver, Cleveland County Deputy Health Director. “Also, individuals who are at highest risk of severe illness from the flu are very much in alignment with those factors that place individuals at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 including being 65 or older, having underlying health conditions, being pregnant, having a weakened immune system, or living in a congregate living setting. We encourage everyone 6 months and older to get the flu vaccine, this year more than ever, to help protect yourself, our community and our already highly strained healthcare system.”

Flu vaccine will be available at the Cleveland County Health Department beginning Monday, October 4, 2021. The vaccine is available Monday - Friday from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, no appointment necessary. The vaccine is free of charge for children 18 and younger who have Medicaid, do not have insurance or are underinsured (meaning insurance does not cover the flu vaccine). The vaccine will also be free for uninsured (non-Medicaid) pregnant women 19 and older who are serviced by the health department and women 19 and older who have a family planning waiver (Be Smart) and are receiving services at the health department. If you have insurance, Medicare or Medicaid, we will bill these third party payers. If you do not meet the above criteria or do not have insurance, Medicare or Medicaid, the charge for the vaccine is \$50. We also have available a limited number of the Flublok vaccines for those 18 and older and High Dose flu vaccines for those 65 and older. Insurance, Medicare or Medicaid can be billed for these vaccines, or the cost is \$85.

If you have questions or need additional information, you may call the Cleveland County Health Department Immunization Clinic at 980-484-5100. You may also find additional information about the flu at [www.flu.nc.gov](http://www.flu.nc.gov).

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