



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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TO: Texas Vaccines for Children (TVFC) Providers

FROM: Saroj Rai, Ph.D. 
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DATE: September 30, 2013

SUBJECT: Influenza Awareness Day in Texas

HB 1204 passed during the 83rd Texas Legislature designates October 1 as Influenza Awareness Day. The purpose of this observance is to raise awareness of the health risks associated with influenza and encourage Texans to take proactive measures to reduce the incidence of flu in Texas. Please help the Texas Department of State Health Service (DSHS) promote this important day.

The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year. Influenza is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently. Even healthy people can get very sick from the flu and spread it to others. The “seasonal flu season” in the United States can begin as early as October and last as late as May. During this time, flu viruses are circulating in the population. An annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and lessen the chance that you will spread it to others. When more people get vaccinated against the flu, less flu can spread through our communities.

Attached are the most recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for prevention of influenza, along with some valuable resources for additional information.

Summary* Recommendations: Prevention and Control of Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices—(ACIP)—United States, 2013-14

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/acip/2013-summary-recommendations.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Seasonal Influenza website.

This site has updates on the 2013-2014 influenza recommendations, prevention of flu, treatments (antiviral drugs), patient and provider education as well as information on influenza activity and surveillance. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

The National Influenza Vaccine Summit (NIVS). Founded by the American Medical Association (AMA) and the CDC. Currently the NIVS is led by the Immunization Action Coalition (IAC), the CDC, and the National Vaccine Program Office (NVPO). The NIVS is dedicated to addressing and resolving influenza and influenza vaccine issues. <http://www.preventinfluenza.org/nivs.asp>

2013-2014 Influenza Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) Current Edition (7/26/2013)

Live, Intranasal Influenza VIS:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/flulive.html>

Inactivated Influenza VIS:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/flu.html>

Influenza Surveillance in Texas. The Texas DSHS conducts year round influenza surveillance activities to monitor trends in illness and circulation of influenza viruses. The surveillance data is published every Friday on our website. The weekly flu report is currently available at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/influenza/surveillance/2013/>. Starting on October 11th, the weekly flu report can be viewed at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/influenza/surveillance/2014/>.

DSHS flu website: <http://www.texasflu.org/>

Flu information especially designed for children:

<http://texasflu.org/flufighters.htm>

DSHS Immunization Branch Flu page:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/flu.shtm>

Publications about flu and other vaccine preventable disease can be ordered at no cost: <https://secure.immunizetexasorderform.com/default.asp>