

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HEALTH COMMISSIONER RECEIVES ANNUAL FLU SHOT Tennesseans Urged to Get Annual Flu Vaccine Now

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – Tennessee Department of Health Commissioner Lisa Piercey, MD, MBA, FAAP received her annual flu shot today at the Rutherford County Health Department in Murfreesboro. The flu vaccine prevents millions of flu-related illnesses and doctors' visits each year and is the first and most important step in preventing the flu.

"We unfortunately see flu-related deaths almost every flu season in Tennessee, and one death is too many," said Piercey. "The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is predicting an early flu season this year, so it's extremely important to get a flu shot now before the flu begins to spread in communities across our state."

The Tennessee Department of Health and the CDC recommend a yearly flu vaccine for everyone aged six months and older. It's especially important for pregnant women to get flu shots to protect themselves and their unborn children, as flu is more likely to cause severe illness in pregnant women.

"When you get a flu vaccine you're not just protecting yourself from the flu, you're also protecting your family, friends and others around you," said Tennessee Vaccine-Preventable Diseases and Immunization Program Medical Director Michelle Fiscus, MD, FAAP. "Getting a flu vaccine greatly reduces your chance of developing serious illness from the flu."

Flu vaccine is available now across the state from a variety of providers including county health departments, medical clinics and pharmacies. For a list of a local health departments near you, go to www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/localdepartments.html.

Another way to help prevent the spread of flu and other winter viruses is to practice good health habits including frequent hand washing with soapy water or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers and covering coughs and sneezes with a sleeve or tissue. People who are sick should stay home to recover and prevent spreading illness to co-workers, friends and others. For more information about preventing and treating influenza, visit www.cdc.gov/flu/consumer/index.html.

The mission of the Tennessee Department of Health is to protect, promote and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee. Learn more about TDH services and programs at www.tn.gov/health.

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