

Jan. 27, 2014



## Getting a flu vaccine is best defense

### *No-cost children's flu vaccines now available at locations across the county*

SARASOTA COUNTY — This flu season has been especially severe in many communities. Health officials say that getting a flu vaccine is still the best defense against the flu. It also has a very [good safety record](#). Flu vaccines for children, six months to 18 years of age, are now at *no cost* to families.

Come aboard the *Florida Department of Health's (DOH-Sarasota) Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit* to get your child's flu immunization at these Sarasota County school locations:

**Tuesday, Jan. 28, 4:30-6:30 p.m.**

Woodland Middle School  
2700 Panacea Blvd., North Port

**Wednesday, Jan. 29, 4:30-6:30 p.m.**

Brookside Middle School  
3636 S Shade Ave., Sarasota

**Friday, Jan. 31, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**

Laurel Nokomis Elementary  
1900 Laurel Road E., Nokomis



Healthy children ages 2 and older have the option of getting the no-shot nasal mist version of the seasonal flu vaccine. Parents are reminded that children younger than 9 years of age who have not previously been vaccinated against the flu will need two doses of the flu vaccine, given a month apart, for full protection.

No appointment is needed for children's immunizations. However, a parent or guardian must be present.

Unlike the common cold, the flu can cause severe illness and life-threatening complications. The H1N1 flu virus that caused a world-wide [pandemic](#) in 2009 is currently the most common circulating flu virus. The majority of flu deaths currently being reported in Florida and the United States are in healthy younger people and pregnant women who had not received a flu vaccine.

Local health officials say that because outbreaks of flu-like illness can occur in the schools and then spread to families it is important that children get immunized.

#### SARASOTA COUNTY MEDIA RELATIONS

**CURT PREISSER**

desk 941-861-5884  
cell 941-650-2883

cpreisse@scgov.net

**JAMIE CARSON**

desk 941-861-5451  
cell 804-873-3202

jcarson@scgov.net

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The 2013-14 flu vaccine protects against the currently circulating flu viruses, including H1N1. Flu season in Florida will peak in the next several weeks. Now is the time for those who have not yet been vaccinated to get a flu shot. Those who get vaccinated can expect to get protection within two weeks.

## Take Action to Fight the Flu:

1. Take time to get the flu vaccine.
2. Take everyday precautions to prevent the spread of the germs:
  - **Wash your hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner. For more information and downloadable hand washing reminders, visit [www.cleanhandscampaign.com](http://www.cleanhandscampaign.com).
  - **Cover your coughs** and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue, or the inside of your elbow - not your bare hand. Throw used tissues in the trash and wash hands.
  - **Stay at home** when you are sick. Keep sick children home. Stay home until free from fever at least 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).
3. Take antiviral medications to shorten to the severity and duration of the flu if your doctor prescribes them.

For more information, call DOH-Sarasota's Office of School Health at 941-927-9000, ext. 32101 or visit [www.sarasotahealth.org](http://www.sarasotahealth.org).

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### ***MEDIA NOTES:***

**Note:** Media can get interviews and photos from consenting parents. We are encouraging media interviews with a subject matter expert be arranged in advance of these school-based flu vaccination clinics.

#### **DOH-Sarasota Media Contact:**

Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell 941-302-1058; [Dianne.Shipley@flhealth.gov](mailto:Dianne.Shipley@flhealth.gov)

#### **Sarasota County Schools Media Contact:**

Scott Ferguson, 941- 941-927-9000, ext. 31148; cell: 941-539-6938;

[scott.ferguson@sarasotacountyschools.net](mailto:scott.ferguson@sarasotacountyschools.net)

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