



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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STATE EPIDEMIOLOGIST RECOMMENDS IMMUNIZATION FOR EVERYONE OVER SIX MONTHS OLD

SACRAMENTO – Influenza vaccination is recommended for everyone in California over six months of age, said California Department of Public Health (CDPH) State Epidemiologist Dr. Gilberto Chavez during a briefing today on the state of the flu.

“With children back in school, it’s time for Californians to get ready for the fall and winter influenza season,” said Chavez. “Encourage everyone in your family to follow basic flu prevention methods such as washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, staying home when sick, and make sure that they get a flu shot.”

This year’s influenza vaccine will protect against the H1N1 flu strain and two other strains, H3N2 and influenza B.

Chavez also announced that the department’s popular “[Flu-Fighting Film Fest](#)” contest will be held for a second year and challenged creative Californians to develop a catchy flu prevention video or poster that will be shared statewide throughout the season.

Joining Chavez was Dr. Patricia Samuelson of the California Association of Family Physicians and Dr. Mark Sawyer of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Samuelson, the recipient of The Ronald P. Bangasser MD Immunization Leadership Award, communicated the importance of parents getting their children vaccinated.

"It's important that every child over six months of age get the flu vaccine. Even healthy children can get the flu, which can make any child very sick, and can even be fatal," said Samuelson.

Sawyer, professor of clinical pediatrics and a pediatric infectious disease specialist at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine, discussed the current pertussis epidemic and echoed the importance of vaccination, especially for infants and people who are around infants.

“This year’s pertussis epidemic is a call to action to remind Californians that immunity to this disease wears off and to urge everyone – especially family members and caregivers of infants – to make sure to get immunized,” Sawyer said.

The briefing can be viewed on [CDPH’s Web site](#), along with information on [influenza](#), [pertussis](#), and [immunization](#).

