

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT KICKS OFF FLU IMMUNIZATION SEASON

BALTIMORE, MD (October 10, 2007) – With the supply of flu vaccine at an all-time high in the United States this year, the Baltimore City Health Department is kicking off the flu immunization season with a press conference at 11 a.m. at Lexington Market today.

Vaccination is the best way to fight influenza, which can cause severe illness, hospitalization and death. Vaccination is especially recommended for those at increased risk of flu-related complications (children aged 6-59 months, pregnant women, 5-49 year olds with chronic medical conditions, and people 50 and above) and their close contacts (household contacts and health care workers). In addition, children between 6 months and 9 years who have never received a flu shot need 2 doses. Anyone who wants to reduce his/her chance of illness due to flu is advised to be vaccinated.

City residents with questions should contact their doctor or the Health Department to find out whether the flu vaccine is right for them.

Flu vaccine is available at four locations this year:

- 1. Your doctor's office** – call to find out about appointments.
- 2. Your employee health office** – many offices offer flu vaccine, especially in the health care fields.
- 3. Pharmacies and other public businesses** – talk to your neighborhood pharmacist or go online to findaflushot.com.
- 4. Health Department clinics** – the first flu vaccine clinic is today at Lexington Market (400 W. Lexington Street, 2nd Floor, Lexington Room) from 10 am to 2 pm. The clinic is being offered in conjunction with the annual Good Health and Nutrition Day, sponsored by Lexington Market, University of Maryland Medical Center, and Maryland General Hospital.

The complete calendar of Health Department Clinics is available online at <http://www.baltimorehealth.org> or call 410-396-4454.

Everyone can help prevent the spread of germs and illness, including influenza, by following three important tips:

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve, not your hand
- Stay home when you are sick

“Start thinking about the flu vaccine now to prevent illness and complications later,” said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner of Health. “Because flu will take a toll all through the winter, many city residents can still benefit from a flu vaccination into January and February.”

For more information on Lexington Markets Annual Health and Nutrition Day visit:

<http://www.umm.edu/events/>

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