Oct. 26, 2017

DON'T GET SPOOKED BY THE FLU – GET YOUR VACCINE BEFORE HALLOWEEN

Contact:
Christy Jergens, Public Information Officer
Christy.Jergens@FLHealth.gov
Desk: 352-644-2677; Mobile: 352-266-5597

OCALA, Fla.—Halloween is almost here. Soon after, Thanksgiving and the Christmas season will bring even more friends and families together. To prevent holiday joys from turning into post-holiday chills and fevers, the Florida Department of Health in Marion County is encouraging residents to get their yearly flu shot.

"An annual flu shot will help protect you against infection and prevent the spread of seasonal flu to your family, friends and co-workers," said Florida Department of Health in Marion County Health Officer Mark Lander. "Make sure you get your shot as soon as possible to protect yourself in the months ahead."

According to State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. Celeste Philip, flu-related illnesses were responsible for nearly 12,000 deaths in Florida last year. People at higher risk for flu-related complications include children ages newborn to 5, adults over the age of 65, pregnant women and people who have existing medical conditions such as asthma. Getting the flu vaccination if you are healthy helps to prevent illness in these vulnerable populations.

The flu shot changes each year to adjust to new flu strains. The vaccine is recommended for everyone six months and older. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for the body to develop protection against the flu.

People should incorporate everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of the flu, too, in addition to getting the flu shot. Frequently and properly washing your hands, cleaning and disinfecting commonly used surfaces at home, school or the office, coughing or sneezing into your elbow or a tissue, and avoiding touching your face and mouth can further combat germs.

Check with a physician or use the Department of Health's [Flu Shot Locator](#) to schedule your flu vaccine. Visit [FluFreeFlorida.com](#) for more information on how you can be a part of #FluFreeFL.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](#).