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FALL MEANS IT'S TIME FOR A FLU VACCINE



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Sept. 22 is the first day of autumn, although it still feels like summer in Florida. The arrival of fall means it's time to think about flu season and your annual vaccine for protection against a virus that can mean lost days of work and school later.

The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) urges all Floridians older than six months to get vaccinated before Halloween on Oct. 31. (Go to www.PinellasHealth.com for details on DOH-Pinellas' no-cost flu clinic on Oct. 17.) While our flu season peaks in the early months of the year, early vaccination ensures protection during the holiday season when many gather for celebrations and family events.

In addition to taking precautions such as proper handwashing, it's important to avoid this serious illness by getting the seasonal flu vaccine. Flu strains change from year to year so a new vaccine is needed at the start of each season. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for your body to develop protection against the flu.

The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) is offering flu vaccines at its St. Petersburg, Pinellas Park, Clearwater, Mid-County and Tarpon Springs locations. (Go to www.PinellasHealth.com for addresses.) Flu vaccine prices range from \$30 to \$45, depending on the type. There is a version for those with egg allergies for whom the vaccine was not recommended before. For Medicare patients, there's also an administrative fee.

For information about the flu and to find other locations to get the seasonal vaccine, go to www.FluFreeFlorida.com.

Go to www.PinellasHealth.com or call (727) 824-6900 for information about DOH-Pinellas,. Follow us on Twitter @HealthyPinellas.

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About the Florida Department of Health

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

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