



# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### GREENWICH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH URGES RESIDENTS TO RECEIVE FLU SHOTS

Vaccinations available at walk-in clinic.

December 5, 2011

GREENWICH, CT -- Over the past several weeks, the Greenwich Department of Health has held several flu clinics throughout the Town of Greenwich, where hundreds of people have received influenza vaccinations. The Greenwich Department of Health continues to offer influenza vaccinations on a walk-in basis at our Family Health clinic, located on the third floor of the Town Hall. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 2:30 – 3:30 pm, anyone aged 4 and over can receive an influenza vaccination for a fee of \$32 (cash or check accepted). This cost is covered by Medicare Part B.

“Although these clinics have been a success, National Influenza Vaccination Week (December 4 – 10, 2011) provides us with an important opportunity to tell our community how important it is for people to get an annual flu shot,” said Caroline C. Baisley, Director of Health.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses. While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine protects against the three viruses that research suggests will be most common this season: influenza A (H3N2), influenza B, and the H1N1 virus that emerged in 2009 and caused a pandemic.

While the flu can make anyone sick, certain people are at greater risk for serious complications from the flu, causing hospitalization or even death. Those most at risk for complications include adults 50 years and older, children younger than 5, and people with chronic long-term medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and heart disease.

Flu seasons are unpredictable, and their severity can differ substantially from year to year. Each year in the United States, an estimated 5 to 20 percent of the population can be infected with the flu, and more than 200,000 people may be hospitalized during a flu season. Because it takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against influenza virus infection, it is important that people be vaccinated before the season gets underway.

For more information about the Department of Health's walk-in flu clinics, please call our flu hotline at (203) 622-3774.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Greenwich Department of Health:

<http://www.greenwichct.org/HealthDept/HealthDeptDetail.asp?dcid=2644>

CDC Seasonal Flu website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

MMWR 2011-12 Influenza Vaccination Recommendations:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6033a3.htm>

U.S. Food and Drug Administration Influenza Virus Safety & Availability website:

<http://www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/SafetyAvailability/VaccineSafety/UCM110288>