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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 17, 2024

Flu and New COVID Vaccines Available

Flu and new 2024-2025 COVID vaccines available at Cleveland County Health Department beginning September 23rd

SHELBY, NC – September 17, 2024 – The Cleveland County Health Department joins the NC Division of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in urging everyone to protect themselves by getting vaccinated against the flu and COVID-19. Everyone aged 6 months and older is encouraged to be immunized.

Flu and the new 2024-25 COVID-19 vaccine will be available at the Cleveland County Health Department beginning Monday, September 23, 2024. The vaccines are available Monday - Friday from 8:00 – 11:30 am and 1:00-4:30 pm, no appointment necessary.

The flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine are safe and effective and the best way to protect yourself and your family from respiratory illness. Both the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine help protect you from severe disease, hospitalization and death.

Both vaccines have been updated for the new flu and COVID-19 virus strains that will continue to spread this fall and winter.

It is especially important to get your 2024–2025 COVID-19 vaccine if you are ages 65 and older, are at high risk for severe COVID-19, or have never received a COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccine protection decreases over time, so it is important to stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccine.

In addition to vaccination, continue practicing healthy habits to protect yourself and others from viruses:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw the tissue in the trash promptly after use.

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Stay home if you are sick. You should stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone and other symptoms are improving, except to get medical care.

The flu vaccine is free of charge for children 18 and younger who have Medicaid, do not have insurance, or are underinsured (meaning insurance does not cover the flu vaccine). The vaccine will also be free for uninsured (non-Medicaid) pregnant women 19 and older who are serviced by the health department and women and men 19 and older who have a family planning waiver (Family Planning Medicaid Program) and are receiving services at the health department. If you have insurance, Medicare or Medicaid, we will bill these third-party payers. We also have available a limited number of high dose flu vaccines for those 65 and older. Insurance, Medicare or Medicaid can be billed for these vaccines. Individuals who do not meet any of the above criteria for a free flu vaccine and who do not have insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare may call the health department at 980-484-5100 for additional information.

Insurance, Medicare and Medicaid will be billed for the new 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine. If you are 19 or older and do not have insurance or your insurance does not cover the vaccine, this vaccine will be provided free of charge.

To learn more about the flu, please visit www.flu.nc.gov.

To learn more about the new 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine, please visit www.cdc.gov/covid/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html

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