Press Release
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It's Not Too Late to Protect Yourself Against the Flu

Annual vaccination is the best way to protect yourself against the influenza virus.

PECOS, Texas (Dec 6, 2021) – The holiday season is upon us, which means you will likely be spending more time with friends and loved ones over the next several weeks. With gatherings comes more opportunities for spreading the flu and other respiratory viruses, such as COVID-19.

This week, Dec. 5-11, is National Influenza Vaccination Week, providing everyone with an important reminder to get your annual flu vaccination if you have not yet done so.

"The Flu seems to arrive in our area a bit later than in the northern part of the country," Dr. James Tarin, Family Practice, at Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, a service of Reeves County Hospital District. "Even though October and November are considered the ideal month for flu shots, what is most important is that you get vaccinated."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), flu activity during the 2020-2021 season was very low due to pandemic-related face coverings and social distancing measures. With this year's holiday season looking more normal than last year, the CDC anticipates this year's flu season to to be much more active.

So how can you protect yourself and your loved ones during this year's holiday gatherings? The CDC recommends that everyone six months and older get vaccinated.

"Each year the flu virus changes, so a flu vaccine is recommended annually for the best protection," Dr. Tarin adds. "It is because of this that vaccinations are reviewed each year and updated as appropriate to better match flu viruses that are expected to spread in the U.S. this season."

It is still possible for someone who has received a flu shot from contracting the virus, although symptoms in such cases are typically less severe than those who have not been vaccinated.

According to health officials, it is possible to become sick with both the flu and COVID-19 at the same time. Both viruses are contagious respiratory illnesses, but different types of viruses cause them.

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Wearing face masks and physical distancing can help protect you and others from respiratory viruses like flu and COVID-19. The best way to reduce your risk of flu illness and its potentially serious complications is to get a flu vaccine each year for everyone six months and older.

If you have not yet received a COVID-19 vaccine or a COVID-19 booster shot, the CDC recommends you do so as soon as possible. Both flu and COVID-19 vaccines can be safely administered at the same time.

High-dose flu vaccines are available for individuals aged 65 and older are available for $50. Regular dose flu vaccines are available for $25. Individuals with egg allergies can receive a special flu vaccine for $50. Private insurance is accepted for flu shots during in-office clinic visits. Medicare and most private insurance plans cover the annual flu shot.

COVID-19 vaccines are available free of charge, regardless of insurance coverage. For more information about vaccines and scheduling an appointment to get vaccinated, please call the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic at 432-447-0565. To learn more about local healthcare programs and services, visit www.reevescountyhospital.com.

About Reeves County Hospital District
Reeves County Hospital District (RCHD) provides healthcare services for people in Reeves County and neighboring communities in West Texas. Founded in 1954, RCHD, a Level IV Trauma Center, offers a wide variety of medical services, including emergency care, diagnostic radiology, physical therapy, general surgery, a clinical laboratory, and more. RCHD also operates American Home Health and Hospice and the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, which offers family care, immunizations, and other medical services. For more information, please visit www.reevescountyhospital.com.

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