



Press Release
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Flu Shots Are Now Available

Do not delay in getting vaccinated against the influenza virus.

PECOS, Texas (Oct. 18, 2021) – The previous flu season was mild due to face coverings and social distancing measures in 2020 related to COVID-19. With social events now back on, and the lack of face-covering mandates, the 2021-2022 flu season could pan out much differently. Are you and your family ready?

“While COVID has dominated the news for almost two years now, we have to remember that other health threats remain in existence, including the seasonal flu,” says Bob Rice, FNP at Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, a service of Reeves County Hospital District. “Annual flu shots are the best prevention method for reducing the effects of the influenza virus.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it is recommended that everyone six months and older get vaccinated by the end of October each year. Timing is suggested to help your body build immunity before the upward swing in flu cases during the flu season, typically from October through March.

The CDC estimates that there were upwards of 62,000 flu deaths in the 2019-2020 flu season. Statistics have shown that COVID-19 has been far more lethal than the flu, causing the death of more than 700,000 Americans, including 60,000 Texans.

This year, flu vaccines in the U.S. are quadrivalent (four-component), meaning they are designed to protect against the four flu viruses that research indicates are most likely to spread and cause illness among people during the upcoming flu season.

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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COVID-19 is caused by infection with a coronavirus, and seasonal flu is caused by infection with many influenza viruses that spread annually.

It is possible to have flu and other respiratory illnesses like COVID-19 at the same time. Some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, making it hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone.

Unlike the flu, COVID-19 can cause loss of sense of taste or smell. However, other symptoms of the two illnesses can be similar. Symptoms can include fever, chills, coughing, and muscle and body aches. Diagnostic testing is needed to determine which type of virus you have.

“Although it is still possible for someone who has received a flu shot from contracting the virus, symptoms in such cases are typically less severe than they are for someone who has not been vaccinated,” Rice adds. “Prevention methods like immunizations, when available, continue to be critical for our overall health.”

Wearing masks and physical distancing can help protect you and others from respiratory viruses like flu and COVID-19. However, 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.

Additionally, local health officials urge community members who have not yet received a COVID-19 vaccine to do so as soon as possible. Flu vaccines and COVID-19 vaccines can be given at the same time.

Flu Shots are available by appointment at the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic. High-dose flu vaccines are available for individuals aged 65 and older for \$50. Regular dose vaccines are available for \$25. Individuals with egg allergies can receive a special dose for \$50.

For more information regarding flu shots, or to schedule an appointment with a local medical provider, please call the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic at 432-447-0565.

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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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