



Alton Memorial Hospital Offering Flu Shots Nov. 2

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Advance Appointments Required; \$20 or Medicare Part B Are Payment Options

ALTON, IL – To help area residents fend off the flu, Alton Memorial Hospital will provide influenza vaccinations from 8 to 11 a.m. Friday, Nov. 2, in the Beeby Wing lobby. The appointments are for those 18 and older.

A limited supply of vaccines is available and advance appointments are required. Call 1-800-392-0936 to make an appointment. Medicare Part B pays for the flu shot. Those with Medicare Part B coverage must present their Medicare card at the time of their vaccination. For all others, the cost is \$20, payable by cash or check to Alton Memorial Hospital. Medicare HMOs or other insurance plans that involve a co-pay at the doctor's office will NOT be billed. Anyone who does not have Medicare Part B will have to pay \$20 at the time of their shot. You will get a receipt and then you should be able to work out the reimbursement with your insurance company.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends an annual flu shot for all adults, especially people who are at increased risk for serious complications from the flu, including:

- People age 50 or older;
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions including asthma, or adults who need regular medical care for conditions such as diabetes, liver disease or kidney disease;
- Adults who have chronic heart or lung conditions;
- Adults with a weakened immune system due to HIV/AIDS or other diseases affecting the immune system, long-term steroid treatment and cancer treatment with X-rays or drugs;
- Women who will be more than three months pregnant during the flu season;

- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including:
 - Health care workers;
 - Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu;
 - Household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of children less than six months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated).

Those with a severe allergy to hens' eggs, have had a severe reaction to a flu shot in the past or have a history of Guillain-Barre Syndrome should not have the vaccination. You should not get a flu shot if you are moderately or severely ill with an upper respiratory infection or fever. You should wait until you recover.

The flu is an infection of the nose, throat and lungs that can easily be passed on to people of all ages. It causes sore throat, cough, headache, fever, chills and muscle aches.

According to the CDC, an average of 226,000 people are hospitalized every year because of influenza and 36,000 die, mostly the elderly from flu-related complications.

For more information regarding CDC recommendations for children, go to www.cdc.gov/flu.