

## Saint Anthony's Offers Flu Shots

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(ALTON, IL) – It's not too late to receive a flu shot – appointments are available for the community on Friday, January 11, from 9 to 11 a.m. in the lobby area of Saint Clare's Hospital, 915 East Fifth Street.

For the fourth week in a row, the proportion of people seeing health care providers for flulike illness is above the national baseline, and jumped from 2.8% to 5.6% in that time, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

The 2012-13 seasonal influenza vaccine virus strains are made from the following three vaccine viruses: an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus; an A/Victoria/361/2011 (H3N2)-like virus; a B/Wisconsin/1/2010-like virus (from the B/Yamagata lineage of viruses).

While the H1N1 virus used to make the 2012-2013 flu vaccine is the same virus that was included in the 2011-2012 vaccine, the recommended influenza H3N2 and B vaccine viruses are different from those in the 2011-2012 influenza vaccine for the Northern Hemisphere.

"In general, anyone who wants to reduce their chances of getting the flu can get vaccinated," said Tammy Stilwell, R.N., Clinical Outreach Coordinator. "However, there are certain people who should get vaccinated each year. They are either people who are at high risk of having serious flu complications or people who live with or care for those at high risk for serious complications."

Billing for Medicare or Medicare HMO recipients will be provided at the Saint Anthony's flu immunization clinics; resident should bring their Medicare card. Any individual not covered by Medicare or Medicare HMO may receive a flu shot for \$30 when paying with check or cash. Appointments are required by calling 618-465-2264.

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