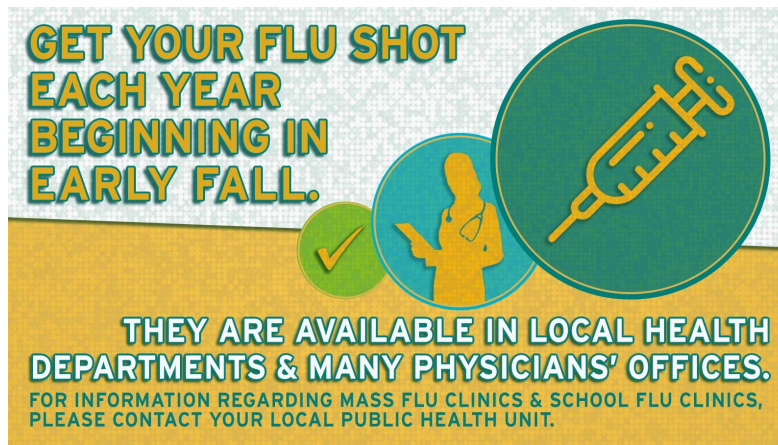




Arkansas House Newsletter

August 7, 2020

August is Immunization Awareness Month



With children headed back to school this month, now is the perfect time for many families to get caught up on immunizations. The summer of 2020 may be more critical than previous summers, as there is a concern that immunizations have declined in recent months due to the pandemic.

August is National Immunization Awareness Month.

National Immunization Awareness Month is an annual observance held in August to highlight the importance of vaccination for people of all ages.

When you receive immunizations, your chance of becoming ill from diseases is much lower. Furthermore, if you become sick, you will likely experience a milder case than if you were not vaccinated. Immunizations lower your risk of complications from infectious diseases, such as seasonal flu and shingles. They can also reduce your risk of a hospital stay. This prevention is especially important now, as hundreds of people are currently in the hospital for COVID-19.

Although we think of the fall as flu season, Dr. Jose Romero, Secretary of Health at the Arkansas Department of Health, has stated that August is the time of year when health providers start vaccinating against influenza.

Typically, only half of Arkansans receive a flu shot every year. The Health Department is hoping to increase that percentage this year.

Dr. Romero also stated this week that we don't know yet what the confluence is between influenza and COVID-19.

The Health Department will have the flu vaccine available next month. The department will hold drive-thru vaccination clinics starting Sept. 21. The vaccine will also be made available to schools throughout the state. Clinics and pharmacies may have the flu vaccine available even sooner.

As a reminder, Arkansas law requires all students attending Arkansas schools and licensed childcare facilities to be vaccinated against certain diseases, unless an official exemption form is filed. Visit www.healthy.arkansas.gov to learn more.