

Get your influenza shots, experts urge

Calling influenza and pneumonia "underrated killers," the American Lung Association of Michigan and the Michigan Department of Public Health urged all Michiganders at risk to get their flu and pneumonia shots immediately.

People under the age of 35 who are at high or moderate risk from influenza were strongly recommended to get a supplemental vaccination against a new A-Taiwan influenza strain when the vaccine becomes available in early December. They shouldn't delay getting the standard 1986-87 flu shot that is available now.

"Recent reports show that some 2,000 Michigan residents die each year from pneumonia and influenza," said Dr. Robert Brush, spokesman for the American Lung Association of Michigan. "That's why we've chosen flu and pneumonia prevention as the educational theme for our Christmas Seal Campaign that officially starts today."

"Most deaths from flu and pneumonia are preventable thanks to safe and effective vaccines," Dr. Brush said. "Unfortunately, they are underutilized."

FLU SHOTS must be given annually, but the pneumonia vaccine provides long-term protection and has to be given only once in a lifetime. High-risk Michigan residents who are strongly encouraged to get the currently available standard flu shot and a pneumonia shot are people

with chronic lung or heart disease and residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities. These individuals are at highest risk from influenza complications, according to state health director Gloria Smith. She further urges all healthy adults over age 65 get the shots as well as people who have illnesses that require regular medical follow-up. These conditions include diabetes, renal dysfunction, anemia, asthma and/or other conditions that suppress their immune systems. Also included in this category are children on long-term aspirin therapy.

Other people for whom flu shots are recommended are those who care for or have close contact with high-risk patients. Anyone who wants to avoid the flu this year should consider getting the protection.

HIGH-RISK people should ask their doctor for the shots or they can call their local health department to see whether the shots are available. Flu and pneumonia vaccines are reimbursable under Medicare.

About protection against the A-Taiwan flu strain, Smith emphasized that not everyone under 35 years of age needs the special supplemental vaccination. "It's only those high- or moderate-risk people who are in danger of serious complications from an influenza infection," she said.

"High-risk younger patients, however, should not delay getting the

1986-87 standard vaccine regardless of when the supplemental vaccine for the A-Taiwan strain becomes available," she added.

Most people over 35 were exposed to flu strains similar to the Taiwan strain between the mid-1930s and 1950s. As a result, they're likely to be already protected, health officials said.

Flu shots for infants under 6 months of age are not effective and, therefore, are not recommended. Anyone who is allergic to eggs also should not receive the vaccine. Doctors will probably wait until af-

ter the first trimester before giving the flu shot to pregnant women. The influenza vaccine is considered generally safe for expectant mothers.

ACCORDING TO THE U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the percentage of deaths from pneumonia and influenza reported in 121 U.S. cities during the first four months of 1985 was the highest since 1976. Statistics show that 1.5 million people in the nation are at risk, but only 300,000, or 20 percent, annually get immunized.

Flu is a lung disease, but it affects

the whole body. It may produce chills, weakness, dry cough, aching of the head, back, arms and legs, sore throat and loss of appetite. For healthy children and adults, flu typically is a moderately severe illness. But the flu can be very serious or life-threatening for those over 65 or patients who are sick from a chronic illness such as lung disease.

"Pneumonia is still the sixth leading cause of death in this country, and it claims 54,000 lives each year," Dr. Brush said. "It is a serious complication of the flu."

OLDER PEOPLE and those with chronic lung diseases are less likely to fight off pneumonia and its complications.

"And yet the pneumonia vaccine in particular is not utilized often enough despite the fact that it provides protection against 23 different types of bacteria responsible for 90 percent of bacterial pneumonia in the country," Brush said.

For free information on flu and pneumonia, call the American Lung Association of Michigan, the Christmas Seal people, toll-free at 1-800-292-5979.

HUD housing is approved for seniors

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recently approved an application submitted by Mercy Services for Aging and the Highland Township Senior Housing Advisory Council for \$1.3 million to build a senior housing project in Highland Township.

Mercy Services for Aging, Farmington Hills and St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Pontiac have been working with the Highland Township Senior Housing Advisory Council since the fall of 1985, exploring the senior housing needs in Highland Township.

An application for the 22-unit housing project was approved by HUD on Sept. 30. The new housing will consist of eight efficiency and 24 one-bedroom apartments.

The housing project offers apartment living at HUD-subsidized rates to people who are independent, low-income elderly and handicapped.

The newly established Highland Area Not-For-Profit Housing Corp. will govern the project. Mercy Services for Aging will submit a proposal to manage the project.

Mercy Services for Aging has also sponsored the recently opened Heritage Place housing project, in Lake Orion, offering 55 HUD-subsidized apartments to low-income seniors and handicapped people. The Heritage Place project is governed by the Orion Area Not-For-Profit Housing Corp.

In addition, ground was broken in September for Bellbrook senior housing complex in Rochester Hills. Both the Heritage and Bellbrook projects were developed in conjunction with St. Joseph Mercy Hospital.

Mercy Services for Aging is a subsidiary of Mercy Health Services based in Farmington Hills. It is one of the largest health care systems in the United States and a sponsored work of the Sisters of Mercy—Provinces of Detroit.

St. Joseph Mercy Hospital is a divisional hospital of the Sisters of Mercy Health Corp., also a subsidiary of Mercy Health Services.

Variance OK'd on a split vote

In a 3-1 split vote Nov. 3, Farmington City Council members decided to allow Farmington Appliance Service Center to place banners on its building and a tree for two weeks.

Councilman Arnold Campbell dissented. Those approving the measure were Mayor William Hartsock and Councilmen Ralph Yoder and Richard Tupper. Councilwoman Shirley Richardson was absent.

The business recently moved from downtown Farmington to the north side of Grand River, just east of Power Road. Owner George Iden requested city approval for the banner, arguing his customers were having trouble finding the new location.

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69¢

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SAVE 30¢

Bakery

Heavy 1/2 Butter with 30% Fat

Oven Fresh Bread

79¢

Green Fresh, Dishes
Brown & Serve Rolls

79¢

Frozen Banquet

Apple, Blueberry, Cherry, Pumpkin, Mince or Blackberry

Banquet Pies

89¢

Dairy

Quarters
Blue Bonnet Margarine

45¢

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FAME Plates

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SAVE 38¢

Together, we can change things.

American Red Cross

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