

OSF HealthCare to Begin Flu Vaccinations Sept 1

b-roll (NONE)

OSF HealthCare will offer flu immunizations at its various facilities beginning Friday, September 1. That includes primary care, specialty and prompt care clinics.

The peak flu season typically runs from October through March every year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends nearly everyone age six months and older get the flu shot. Infants, people with chronic diseases and those who are 65 years and older are at most-risk for the illness. But Ginny Pisano, Director of Ambulatory Quality Improvement with OSF Medical Group, says healthy people are not immune.

“You may feel like you are a healthy person, but even healthy people develop serious complications from the flu,” said Pisano. “So, we really want to make sure that we’re managing that and stay accountable for taking care of all of our patients, not just those at risk.”

(Flu vaccine_ginny_pisano_1 :15at risk.)

Pisano says there’s also the threat of passing the flu on to someone who is susceptible to serious complications such as young children. The CDC reported 101 flu-associated deaths in kids occurring during the 2016-17 season.

“We think of the flu as a rather benign, contained illness over a couple of days, but knowing young, healthy people still die from it is why we put so much attention on this,” said Pisano.

(Flu vaccine_ginny_pisano_2 :14 ...on this.)

A study published in Pediatrics found that flu vaccination reduced the risk of flu-associated death by half among children with underlying high-risk conditions and by nearly two-thirds among otherwise healthy kids from 2010 through 2014.

OSF will offer one standard flu shot to everyone six months and older. An egg-free option is also available for adults 18 or older who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs. It takes two weeks to get the maximum benefit of the flu vaccine.