



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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FREE FLU SHOTS, PERTUSSIS VACCINATIONS AVAILABLE *Participants in Mass Vaccination Drills Receive Free Immunizations*

You can help the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) test its emergency response plans and receive free immunizations for your participation.

HHS is conducting mass vaccination drills in El Cajon and Chula Vista on Friday, Nov. 5. The drills are aimed at ensuring the County is able to handle any type of major emergency that requires a large amount of people to receive medication as quickly as possible.

"We regularly hold these exercises to test our emergency response," said Supervisor Dianne Jacob, District 2, San Diego County Board of Supervisors. "This is an excellent opportunity for the public to help us ensure we are prepared, and for them to receive important vaccinations that help keep our communities healthy."

The vaccinations will take place at the Ronald Reagan Community Center, 195 East Douglas Avenue, El Cajon from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the HHS South Region Family Resource Center at 690 Oxford Street in Chula Vista from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Members of the public will be able to receive a flu shot, and those ages 10 and older will also be able to get a pertussis vaccination. Pneumococcal vaccine for pneumonia will also be available for people ages 65 and over and those that have chronic medical conditions.

"These diseases can be prevented," said Supervisor Greg Cox, District 1, San Diego County Board of Supervisors. "Every County resident should get the necessary shots to protect themselves and their families."

"We encourage people to get their flu shot before the influenza season is in full effect," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "We're in the midst of a record-setting year for pertussis, unfortunately, so we're offering the whooping cough vaccine as well in an effort to help protect as many people as possible."

There have been 721 confirmed cases of pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, reported so far in 2010. There were 143 cases in all of 2009 and the previous high for the county was 371 cases in 2005.

Each year influenza-related complications are responsible for 36,000 deaths and more than 200,000 hospitalizations. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone as the first and most important step in protecting against this serious disease. The 2010-2011 flu vaccine will protect against three different flu viruses: an H3N2 virus, an influenza B virus and the H1N1 virus.

For more information about vaccinations, contact the HHS Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit www.sdiz.org.

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