



Jeb Bush  
Governor

John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.P.H.  
Secretary

**PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

---

Friday, October 08, 2004

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact:  
Jeannine Mallory, M.P.A.  
Public Information Director  
727-824-6908

**INFORMATION FOR THOSE SEEKING A FLU SHOT**

At present, there is a national shortage of the flu vaccine. Unfortunately, due to this shortage, the Pinellas County Health Department has NO flu vaccine at the present time.

"We want everyone to know that we at the Pinellas County Health Department, and the Florida Department of Health (DOH), are doing our best to acquire an alternate supply of the vaccine to help ensure that it is available for those who truly need it most," said John P. Heilman, M.D., M.P.H., Director of the Pinellas County Health Department. "Because of the shortage, we are asking healthy individuals who are not in the priority groups to please delay or forego getting a flu shot this year. This will allow the most vulnerable members of our community to be vaccinated against influenza."

High-risk individuals who should be vaccinated against influenza include the following:

- Persons aged 65 and older;
- Babies aged 6 months to 23 months;
- Residents and employees of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities that house persons of any age who have long term illnesses;
- Persons 2 to 64 years of age who need regular medical care or have chronic medical conditions or weakened immune systems;
- Children aged 6 months to 18 years who are on long-term aspirin therapy and therefore could develop Reye syndrome after the flu; and
- Women who will be pregnant during the flu season.

Additionally, the following people should be vaccinated:

- Healthcare workers in hospitals and doctors' offices – including emergency response workers – who have direct patient contact; and
- Caregivers and household contacts of children younger than 6 months.

If you need a flu shot because you are in one of the categories above, here are some suggestions:

- Check with your healthcare provider to see if you can get a flu shot there.
- If you have access to the internet, go to [www.findaflushot.com](http://www.findaflushot.com) to locate a flu shot clinic near your neighborhood.
- Stay in touch with the local media for announcements of flu shot availability.

(MORE)

**FLU SHOT SHORTAGE, 1st ad.**



Jeb Bush  
Governor

John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.P.H.  
Secretary

---

**PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

---

These are things everyone can do to help protect themselves against the flu and the spread of germs:

- Get in the habit of washing your hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand cleaner;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth;
- If possible, avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Stay at home when you are sick, and do not send your children to school when they are sick;
- Do not share eating utensils, drinking glasses, towels or other personal items – even with members of your family;
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue every time you sneeze, then throw away the used tissue; and
- Remind children to practice healthy habits, too!

For more information about influenza and ways to protect yourself, the community and the people most important to you, please visit the Florida Department of Health website at [www.doh.state.fl.us](http://www.doh.state.fl.us) or visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

**###**