



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

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## **Alabama experiences high influenza-like illness activity; flu shots still recommended**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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The flu season is here, and Alabama is one of 23 states experiencing high influenza-like illness activity, and one of 43 reporting widespread activity. The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) reminds everyone that influenza vaccine is the most important preventive measure against the flu.

Each year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention studies how well the flu vaccine protects against flu illness. While individuals and people in certain age groups may develop different levels of immunity, vaccine reduces the chances of getting flu by about 50 to 60 percent or more when the vaccine viruses are like the ones circulating in the community.

This year, laboratory tests done by the ADPH show that most of the circulating virus in Alabama is influenza A (H3), which is similar to the virus protection found in this year's flu vaccine. Dr. Karen Landers, ADPH, states, "It is not too late to vaccinate for flu and reduce the risk of illness. In addition, it is important that people wash hands, cover coughs, and stay home when they have influenza-like illnesses."

Landers reminds the public that certain people with influenza are at higher risk of complications from the disease. It is important that those who have underlying health conditions or may be caregivers of high-risk individuals check with their physicians or healthcare providers about antiviral medications that might help them recover more quickly from the flu.

For more information regarding influenza, visit [adph.org](http://adph.org).