



## SOUTHWEST PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

1109 North Jackson Street  
Albany, Georgia 31701-2022  
(229) 430-4599 Fax (229) 430-5143 Emergency 888-430-4590  
[www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org](http://www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org)

February 24, 2008  
**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Carolyn Maschke, Public Information Officer  
229-430-1969, 229-357-0257; [cwmaschke@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:cwmaschke@dhr.state.ga.us)

### **With flu “widespread” in Southwest District, Public Health says there’s still time for flu shot**

The Southwest Health District, reporting widespread influenza activity in its 14 counties, is urging residents to get flu shots if they haven’t already done so.

“We have vaccine on hand,” said Southwest Health District Health Director Dr. Jacqueline Grant. “Flu shots are recommended because there’s always the possibility of exposure.”

During the past week, 151 cases of flu have been confirmed in the District, added Southwest District Health Epidemiologist Jacqueline Jenkins. Of those, 11 patients required hospitalization. She said the District’s flu activity mirrors trends seen at the state and national levels. The illness strikes both children and adults, she said.

“On the district level, we have had a total of 270 positive cases of influenza reported this year, with 21 patients receiving hospital care,” she said.

Both Type A and Type B strains of the flu are circulating in the District, said Grant. “It takes around two weeks after you get your flu shot before you are fully protected, but if you are exposed to the flu during that two-week window, the vaccine may make your illness less severe,” she said.

“Flu shots are especially important for people at high risk for serious flu complications such as young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart or lung disease and people 65 and older,” said Grant.

She said everyday preventative actions include:

- Covering nose or mouth when sneezing or coughing
- Washing hands often with soap and warm water
- Staying home when sick

County Health Departments charge \$25 for flu shots. Medicare is accepted. Appointments for those interested in getting vaccinated are available by calling their county health department.

Baker	Calhoun	Colquitt	Decatur	Dougherty	Early	Grady
Lee	Miller	Mitchell	Seminole	Terrell	Thomas	Worth

“Flu is a serious contagious disease. Each year in our country, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized because of flu complications, and 36,000 die,” Grant said. “Getting a flu shot is a quick, convenient and inexpensive way to protect your health and the health of our community.”

###

Baker	Calhoun	Colquitt	Decatur	Dougherty	Early	Grady
Lee	Miller	Mitchell	Seminole	Terrell	Thomas	Worth