

# Approved nasal flu vaccine provides alternative

Hanford Environmental Health  
Foundation, Health Education Services

For those of you who are “needle shy” and still wish to be vaccinated against influenza, here is some good news: the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved an influenza vaccine that can be delivered as a nasal mist.

The vaccine, called “FluMist,” contains attenuated, or weakened, live influenza virus. It is administered by a health-care provider much in the same manner as any nasal spray solution. The vaccine, proven to be safe and effective for healthy children and adults, is available in the Tri-Cities.

The eligibility criteria are a little more rigid than the vaccine delivered in a flu shot. For example, the recipient should be between 5 and 49 years of age; should not have long-term health problems such as heart or lung disease; have a weakened immune system; or be undergoing cancer, steroidal or long-term aspirin therapy. FluMist is also not recommended for anyone (family members, physicians or nurses) who may come in close contact with anyone with a weakened immune system. The cost of the nasal vaccine ranges from \$50 to \$75.

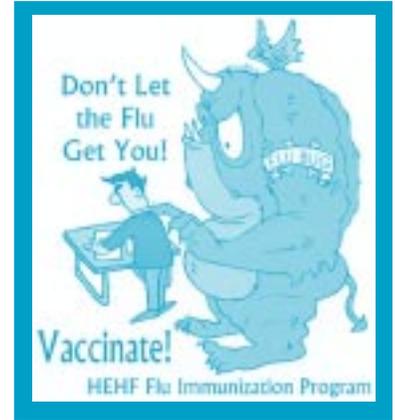
It is important that you protect yourself against influenza, a serious illness that can cause fatal complications. Each year the flu vaccine has protected millions of people from the miseries of the flu. In the past, the only route was an injection through a very small needle into the deltoid muscle of the upper arm. The vaccine works systemically to stimulate the immune system to build antibodies to combat the three major flu viruses identified for that particular flu season. This takes about two weeks. The most common side effect is a slightly sore arm for a day or two. Occasionally, minor symptoms such as a sore throat or muscle aches may occur.

In spite of the effectiveness of the flu vaccine, some people claim they don't need to get a flu shot because they are seldom sick. What they don't realize is that even a mild case of the flu can be very serious, even deadly, if passed on to a family member or co-worker who may have other health concerns. Other people may choose not to be vaccinated because they are “needle shy,” — even the thought of getting a shot can cause some to become light-headed. Children frequently associate a trip to the doctor's office with the unpleasant experience of getting a “shot.” A few people are not comfortable with receiving a systemic medication even though it is an inactivated (killed) vaccine and cannot cause the flu.

The Hanford Environmental Health Foundation will not be providing the intranasal vaccine this year because of the time it would take to establish eligibility for each individual who would request this type of vaccine. If you are interested in this alternative vaccine, you are encouraged to talk to your personal health-care provider. Even though the nasal vaccine is not recommended for everyone, it is certainly an effective and more comfortable alternative vaccination option for some people.

HEHF is providing the flu shots at clinics listed in the schedule on this page. All Hanford employees over 18 having a Department of Energy security badge, except those who work for Bechtel National and Battelle Columbus, are eligible to receive the shots. Pregnant employees and employees having symptoms of the cold or flu are not eligible either. For questions about influenza or the HEHF flu shot clinics, call the HEHF Flu Hotline at 376-1000. ■

*Flu-shot schedule on page 26.*



# 2003 Flu Immunization Schedule

Area	Clinic Date	Time	Location
Battelle	Monday, Oct. 13	9 a.m.-3 p.m.	Battelle Auditorium
Battelle	Tuesday, Oct. 28	9 a.m.-noon	Battelle Auditorium
200E Area	Tuesday, Oct. 14	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	2101-M, Cosmos/Bijou Room
200E Area	Thursday, Oct. 30	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	2101-M, Cosmos/Bijou Room
Federal Building	Wednesday, Oct. 15	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	825 Jadwin, room 142
Federal Building	Wednesday, Oct. 29	9 -11 a.m.	825 Jadwin, room 142
100K Area	Thursday, Oct. 16	6 a.m.-noon	MO-500, Conference Room West
200 West Area	Monday, Oct. 20	6:30 -9 a.m.	MO-250
200 West Area	Wednesday, Oct. 22	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	MO-287, Conference Room A111
200 West Area	Wednesday, Oct. 29	1-5 p.m.	HEHF Health Care Center, 2719
300 Area	Monday, Oct. 20	11 a.m.-3 p.m.	3763, Conference Room
100N	Tuesday, Oct. 21	6:30 -9 a.m.	1103N Conference Room A & B
Bechtel	Tuesday, Oct. 21	11:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.	3350 George Washington Way, Assembly Room
2440 Stevens Center	Thursday, Oct. 23	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	Conference Room 1200
400 Area	Monday, Oct. 27	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	4710-A, conference room (Only employees working in this secured area may participate)