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## Flu shots available at Munson health center

Flu vaccines are now available.

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Munson Army Health Center wants the Fort Leavenworth community to know that flu vaccines are now available. MAHC administers the vaccine to patients at Gentry Clinic and during routine appointments, as well as at community events like the annual Retiree Appreciation Day and Health Fair Oct. 29.

American adults sick with the flu cost about \$5.8 billion last year in medical visits, medication and lost productivity, according to a new study published in *Health Affairs*, a health care journal. The study encourages everyone to get a flu shot.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the seasonal influenza vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older, with rare exception.

“I would recommend that patients simply connect with our Facebook page and Twitter feed to stay current with the latest community health information. Every day, we post current information about flu — not just information about where to get the vaccines, but also to dispel any misinformation that may be circulating,” said Tracy McClung, MAHC public affairs officer.

Patients do not need an appointment to walk in and receive a flu vaccination at Gentry Clinic. Gentry Clinic hours are 7:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. Flu shots can also be received during routine appointments with a primary care manager at MAHC.

“An example of providing additional information beneficial to patients is that this year we are not using any nasal-administered flu vaccines because the CDC has determined those to be marginally effective. And, an excellent example of the need to add clarification of the facts about flu shot administration this year is getting the word out that, ‘yes, we do have flu shots available for patients 65 and older.’ However, there is a high-dose booster for patients 65 and older that we will not be administering. But, we do, indeed, have flu shots available for our soldiers and everyone else who is eligible,” McClung said.

At the Lewis and Clark Center Oct. 18, MAHC’s Chief of Preventive Medicine Maj. Monica Offenbacher-Looney and her mobile team administered flu vaccinations to 680 soldiers and staff. Staff Sgt. Kristina Snyder, a member of the mobile Preventive Medicine team, said a logistical goal in bringing the flu vaccinations to CGSC was to provide a convenience to students so they would not have to take time away from classes.

“As military leaders, I think it is vitally important we get the flu shot because it sets a good example,” said Maj. Lisa Dixon, a CSGC student who was vaccinated. “And this supports the fact that we also want our soldiers to get vaccinated to remain healthy, so that all of us will have the ability to carry on with any mission at hand.”

The flu vaccine helps ensure soldiers’ readiness.

“It is very important for soldiers to have the flu vaccination because it is a proven measure to prevent a common disease non-battle injury,” Offenbacher-Looney said. “The flu is one of the preventable disease non-battle injuries that we are concerned could literally take out an entire unit, since it is so communicable. So, by being proactive and preventing it with a flu vaccine, we can ensure that our units are deployable and ready to go at a moment’s notice.”

MAHC also uses its Facebook page to disseminate the latest health news information. Look for hash tags #nofluforyou and #knowflu to locate specific information related to flu shots. Visit and connect with the page at <https://www.facebook.com/munsonhealth/>. Also visit the main MAHC website at <https://www.munson.amedd.army.mil/> for information and resources.



PHOTO/ PRUDENCE SIEBERT, FORT LEAVENWORTH LAMP

About 680 flu vaccinations were administered during a midday clinic offered Oct. 18 to make getting the mandatory vaccine easier for Command and General Staff College students. Another CGSC flu shot clinic is offered from noon to 3:30 p.m. at the Lewis and Clark Center. Munson Army Health Center also offers flu vaccinations on a walk-in basis at Gentry Clinic or during routine appointments with primary care managers. Photo by Prudence Siebert/Fort Leavenworth Lamp