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NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Pamela Davenport
(801) 468-2757
(801) 209-0986

Flu Shots for Pregnant Women May Protect Newborns

Pregnant women now have more reason than ever to get their flu shots this year

(Salt Lake County) – A new study has found that flu shots for pregnant women can help protect babies from the flu until they are old enough to get vaccinated themselves and Salt Lake Valley Health Department (SLVHD) Medical Officer, Dr. Dagmar Vitek, is urging Salt Lake County women who are pregnant during the flu season to get their flu vaccinations – for themselves and for their babies.

“There is currently no flu vaccine for babies under six-months-old, but babies in that age group are more likely to be hospitalized for the virus than any other age group,” Dr. Vitek explained. “When vaccinated, a pregnant woman makes antibodies against the flu virus and passes some of them along to her fetus. The new data suggest that these antibodies may provide a grace period for a newborn until they wear off months later.”

The study, published in the New England Journal of Medicine on September 17th, shows that a woman who gets a flu shot while pregnant can pass on its protection to her offspring. Babies whose mothers took the flu vaccine had a 63% reduction in influenza compared with the control group, and a 29% reduction in rates of respiratory illness with fever.

The flu shot is currently recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for all pregnant women however, according to the CDC, only 13 percent of pregnant women reported being vaccinated in the 2006-07 flu season.

Vitek says there are numerous reasons why pregnant women don’t get vaccinated against the flu. “Some women may be misinformed about the safety of the flu vaccine during pregnancy while others may not know the importance of being vaccinated while pregnant. Additionally, obstetricians aren’t always focused on vaccinations during a woman’s pregnancy and may not have flu-shot kits on hand.”

Dr. Vitek adds that, “if a woman’s doctor doesn’t carry the flu vaccine she can get a flu shot easily at one of our SLVHD clinics.”

For information concerning influenza or flu vaccination, visit the SLVHD website at www.slvhealth.org.

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Salt Lake Valley Health Department
IMMUNIZATION CLINICS

Immunization Information Lines

English 534-4693

Español 468-2683

Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Wednesdays, 8:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. (except West Jordan)

Salt Lake City Center

610 South 200 East
Salt Lake City, UT 84111
534-4568 or 534-4575

Ellis R. Shipp Center

4535 South 5600 West
West Valley City, UT 84120
963-7335

South Main Center

3690 South Main Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
468-3690

South East Center

9340 South 700 East
Sandy, UT 84070
255-7114

Rose Park Center

1625 West 700 North, #H
Salt Lake City, UT 84116
521-0778
Mondays 8:30-12:00, 1:00 - 4:30
Wednesdays **10:00-1:30, 2:30-6:00**

West Jordan Center

1740 West 7800 South
West Jordan, UT 84084
569-4370
Tuesdays & Fridays
8:30-12:00, 1:00-4:30

Medicaid and CHIP accepted.

Children age 18 years or younger who have no insurance or
their insurance plan does not pay for vaccines, or they are Native American
can receive a flu shot for \$5.00 per vaccine



Salt Lake Valley Health Department

www.slvhealth.org