

**Free Flu Clinic at the Burlington Mall food court on  
Wednesday, January 4, 2012, from 3 PM to 7 PM**

*Children under nine years of age who have received flu vaccine for the first time earlier this season are encouraged to attend to receive a booster dose of vaccine.*

**December 19, 2011** - Massachusetts health officials estimate that every year an average of 2,600 Massachusetts residents are hospitalized due to complications from the flu, resulting in up to 800 deaths. It is not too late to get a flu shot even in January because flu season doesn't usually peak until February or March.

All Massachusetts residents, (including children 6 months of age and older), are invited to attend a free flu clinic sponsored by the Local Health Departments from Bedford, Lexington and Winchester and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and Emergency Preparedness staff from Region 4A. So far this season, the Local Public Health Departments and the MRC have dispensed over three thousand (3,000) doses of flu vaccine in the surrounding towns around the Burlington Mall. It is the intent of the Local Boards of Health to continue vaccinating citizens throughout the flu season or until supplies have been exhausted.

Influenza vaccine is recommended for everyone who wants to avoid getting the flu virus, or from spreading the flu virus to others. The vaccine is especially important for those who are at higher risk for complications from the flu, including children; adults 50 years of age and older; pregnant women; and, children and adults with chronic medical conditions, such as heart or lung disease, asthma, diabetes, or immune systems weakened by disease, such as HIV infection, or chemotherapy.

Children younger than nine years of age who were not vaccinated against the flu last year should receive a "booster" or second dose of vaccine (separated by at least 4 weeks) by the end of flu season. *"This clinic at the Burlington Mall will be a great opportunity for parents or guardians to bring their children in to receive this important booster or second dose of vaccine. Both the shot (injectable) and mist (intranasal spray) will be available and it does not matter which method was used earlier in the season to vaccinate the child,"* said David Neylon, Public Health Nurse for the Town of Lexington.

It is also important for the public to know that this clinic is a practice drill for local emergency planning partners to practice communication, incident command management and to identify areas of improvement to conduct larger scale clinics if needed during a time of emergency.

In addition to getting vaccinated, people can help protect themselves and others from the flu and other respiratory diseases by washing their hands often, covering their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, and staying home from work and school when they are sick.

A free public clinic will be held on Wednesday, January 4th from 3:00 PM until -7:00 PM at the Burlington Mall food court at 75 Middlesex Turnpike, Burlington, MA 01803 ([www.simon.com](http://www.simon.com)).

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