Importance of a Flu Vaccination in 2020
Talking Points

- In a typical year, over 100,000 Missourians become sick from the flu. Many Missourians of all ages become seriously ill and some are hospitalized. 2020 is anything but typical, and health officials are urging Missourians to get the flu vaccine by the end of October.
- A flu vaccine is recommended annually for everyone six month and older without an increased risk for a serious adverse reaction.
- One measure you can take to protect yourself during this time of COVID-19 is to get a flu vaccine. It is unknown how a person could be affected by experiencing both viruses at the same time.
- Symptoms of flu and COVID-19 significantly overlap one another. Flu symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, chills and fatigue. Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea. Similarities and differences between flu and COVID-19 can be found here.
- To ensure Missouri has the capacity to care for COVID-19 patients, we need to do whatever we can to prevent strain on our health care system and keep Missourians healthy. Flu vaccines are therefore important to the COVID-19 fight. Preventing flu means fewer unnecessary medical visits and hospitalizations.
- While the effectiveness of the flu vaccine varies from year to year, studies have shown that some protection is better than none at all. You are less likely to spread the flu virus to those around you if vaccinated. And it has also been shown to cause symptoms to be more mild if you do become infected.
- Groups of people at high risk for flu-related complications include children age 5 and under, adults older than 65, pregnant women, and those with weakened immune systems or chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease. Those who are in a high risk group and experience symptoms of the flu should contact their primary health care provider.