

Three groups who must get a flu shot

Flu is risky for all, positively dangerous for some people

By Karen DiPippa

In the health world, fall is the start of flu season. Actually, the flu season starts earlier every year it seems.

Now is the time to consider getting your flu shot or inoculation if you haven't already received it. Flu was detected in Arkansas in October. With December through February being the peak flu time, vaccinating is the best protection against the flu virus.

Flu is generally spread by drops when people sneeze, cough or talk while less often it can remain on inanimate surfaces.

You do not receive the flu with the vaccination. It merely activates your own system to produce antibodies for flu fighting. Sometimes, you feel a little off, but it is not the flu, just your body getting itself ready to fight the flu should you come in contact with it.

Healthy people who contract flu usually have a miserable week and are inconvenienced but also have a chance of more severe symptoms, depending on the flu strain itself. Those particularly at risk for complications are:

- People with compromised health conditions like diabetes,

heart disease or asthma

- The elderly or young children
- Pregnant women

Possible complications of flu include bacterial pneumonia, ear and or sinus infections and dehydration, as well as worsening the symptoms of any of the above chronic conditions.

Keep in mind it takes about two weeks to develop the antibodies necessary to fight the flu.

There are a few groups of people who should not get the flu vaccine:

- Those with a life-threatening allergy to the flu vaccine or any ingredient like gelatin or eggs. A recombinant vaccine is available for people with egg allergies because it does not use eggs to make it.

- Anyone younger than six months

- Anyone with a history of a condition called Guillain Barre' syndrome

All others should check with their physician.

Last of all, even without insurance, the cost of flu vaccine is a mere \$15 to \$20 at the pharmacy of your choice if you happen to miss the free health fairs given across the state.

Hoping you have a healthy winter season.

Karen DiPippa is the director of Westside Free Medical Clinic in Little Rock.



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BRIEFS

THE SEASON FOR GIVING

As we approach Advent, Christmas and the New Year, it is the season of giving. There are a number of ways to give through Catholic Charities:

- **Catholic Campaign for Human Development:** On Nov. 21-22, there was a second collection for the CCHD. While the bulk of this collection is sent to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 25 percent remains in Arkansas for use in the local grant program administered by Catholic Charities of Arkansas. This collection funds anti-poverty programs across the nation, as well as within the state.

- **St. Nicholas Partners:** The annual mail-in campaign that benefits all of the programs of Catholic Charities. This year's St. Nicholas card and envelope were inserted in last week's issue of *Arkansas Catholic*.

- **Catholic Adoption Services:** The annual adoptions appeal supports women in crisis pregnancies considering adoption.

- **Catholic Charities Vehicle Donation Program:** The new program allows for the donation of all types of used vehicles in any state of repair. The process is easy, free and earns a tax

deduction. Proceeds for donated vehicles support all of the programs of Catholic Charities.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

Georgina Peña has moved from her position as office manager for the immigration office in Little Rock to become an immigration specialist in that same office.

Bridget Lewis, a parishioner at the Cathedral of St. Andrew in Little Rock, has become the new office administrator for Catholic Charities of Arkansas.

Sam McFall, in his final year as a student at the William Bowen School of Law at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, completed a semester-long externship with Catholic Charities as a legislative researcher.

Emmanuel Torres, a seminarian and a senior in the UALR School of Social Work, is a bachelor of social work intern with Catholic Charities for the 2015-2016 school year. He is assigned duties with Catholic Adoption Services, Parish Social Ministry Office and the Westside Free Medical Clinic.

SPECIALTY CLINICS

Westside Free Medical Clinic would not be able to operate

at Camp Aldersgate since 1982 without the assistance of several medical specialists.

Rheumatologist Dr. Eleanor Lipsmeyer sees patients at the Aldersgate site and Dr. Don Greenway sees patients at his private office of gastroenterology. Ellen Lamb and Sonya Miller complete the staff as pharmacists.

Along with the general medical practice, the specialty clinics for Westside clinic have been expanding. Several of the clinics, which operate in the evenings at St. John Center and Camp Aldersgate, are fairly new so little is known about them.

- The otolaryngology clinic, better known as an ENT (ear, nose and throat) clinic, is just getting off the ground. Dr. Joe Colclasure saw 13 patients for the last quarter of the fiscal year and already has seen 16 patients in this first quarter with expectations of a volume increase. This clinic is held at Westside Clinic on Aldersgate Road.

- The chiropractic clinic operates with the assistance of Dr. Rick Riley. He treated 21 patients last fiscal year and the clinic anticipates an equal or greater number this year.

- The dermatology clinic

remains steady with a patient case of about 75 patients. Dr. Rene Bressinck is current physician following Dr. Mike Carney who began seeing patients at St. John Center.

- The ophthalmology clinic was set up by Dr. Jerry Shue and is currently attended by Dr. Tom Cannon. The clinic performs diabetic retinopathy exams to ensure eyesight is on track for diabetic patients. In the last fiscal year 121 patients were seen. Before this clinic, Dr. Dan Hennesy and his office treated the Westside patients for various eye concerns and continue that assistance today.

FAIR TRADE SALE

A Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade Sale will be held Dec. 2-4 in Morris Hall at St. John Center in Little Rock. The sale will be open from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday, noon to 6 p.m. Thursday and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday.

Sale items from 15 different countries include coffee, scarves, jewelry, soap and Christmas ornaments. Quantities are limited. Only cash or check will be accepted. For more information, call Rebecca Cargile at (501) 664-0340.

Legal

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accredited representative on staff to represent clients in immigration matters.

This year both the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network have funded the Little Rock office to increase access to immigration legal services to immigrants in Arkansas by funding additional immigration specialists.

This summer, the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation grant made it possible for Georgina Peña, the staff's office manager for the past three years, to transition to become an immigration specialist. Pena said she wants to "give voice to the voiceless and help be a light for those who live in the shadows."

Through this grant Pena has already started working on applications to help immigrant victims get work permits, help legal permanent residents renew their green cards and help qualified immigrant youth apply for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. She also helped present information this summer about CISLR services and clients to 90 youth participating in the Catholic Charities Summer Institute.

In response to an increased demand for community-based legal services for immigrants in the U.S. Southeast region, CLINIC is funding 12 fellows in eight states, including one at the Little Rock office, to provide assistance and offer a first line of defense against the unauthorized practice of law.

Catholic Immigration Services hopes to have a fellow in place by Dec. 1. The fellow will focus on outreach to communities that are underserved and work with community partners, such as Arkansas Justice for Our Neighbors and Arkansas United Community

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Coalition to provide increased access to quality immigration legal services.

The initiative between Catholic Immigration Services, CLINIC and the new CLINIC fellow will build a stronger safety net of expert legal advice.

Jeanne Atkinson, CLINIC's executive director said, "I am delighted to support efforts by CISLR where they are serving a growing immigrant population. By helping to integrate immigrants in these locations, these fellows will strengthen families and their communities."