

## It is never too late to get the flu vaccine!

If you have not received your flu vaccine, it is not too late! According to public health officials, cases of flu in our state have been relatively low so far this season, but are beginning to trend upward. “Since October there has been 13 flu-associated deaths in North Carolina, of this figure, 5 deaths occurred December 22-28, 2013” noted Dr. Cardra E. Burns, Health Director, Halifax County Public Health System (HCPHS).

Flu season typically peaks during January and February. Complications from the flu can be particularly dangerous for high risk groups including infants under 2, pregnant women, and people with chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, or immune system problems.

Influenza viruses are spread from person to person when an infected person coughs or sneezes near a susceptible person. Symptoms of influenza include fever, muscle aches, headache, tiredness, cough, sore throat, and runny nose. Uncomplicated influenza illness typically resolves after 3-7 days for the majority of the persons, although cough and tiredness can persist for more than 2 weeks.

In addition to the influenza vaccine, everyone is encouraged to use personal precautions to protect against the spread of flu and other viruses such as:

- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and then discard the tissue promptly.
- Wash hands frequently, preferably with soap and water or an approved hand sanitizer.
- Stay at home when you are sick until you are free of fever for at least 24 hours.

You may receive a flu vaccination at HCPHS Health Department Monday- Friday 8:30-4:00pm. No appointment is necessary. For more information call 252-583-5021 or visit [www.halifaxnc.com](http://www.halifaxnc.com).