

VACCINATE from page 1A

Comparatively, flu symptoms can be much worse, including fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, diarrhea and vomiting.

Traditional flu vaccines, or "trivalent vaccines," protect against three strains of influenza. The vast majority of doses available for the 2018-2019 season will be "quadrivalent vaccines," which protect against the same viruses as the trivalent vaccine and an additional B virus.

For those with an aversion needles, vaccination in nasal spray form is also returning as a recommended option this year after a two-season hiatus.

The spray, FluMist, is quadrivalent and was re-approved this year by the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for non-pregnant individuals aged two through 49.

Age and health may determine which vaccine is appropriate. Particularly, individuals who have egg allergies or have ever suffered from Guillain-Barré Syndrome (a severe paralyzing illness, also called GBS) should talk to a doctor before getting a vaccine.

Flu vaccines are generally

reported to be between 60 and 80 percent effective, though Davis stressed that falling short of 100 percent effectiveness should not dissuade the public from getting vaccinations.

"You'll hear people often use this excuse not to get immunized — they don't believe the immunization works because they got the immunization and then got the flu," he said.

Even in these cases, vaccinated individuals will see a decrease in illness severity and lower the chances of spreading the virus.

"Usually it's not nearly bad as it would have been had you not gotten the immunization," Davis said, "so it actually lessens the impact on your body."

Widespread immunization is also regarded as an effective way to disrupt the chain of infection. Herd immunity, a form of infectious disease resistance which is enabled by a high proportion of immune individuals in a population, slows the spread of disease and helps prevent infection of those who may be at greater risk for flu-related complications.

The proportion needed for effective herd immunity varies by disease.

"With flu, it's only 50 percent of the community that needs to be immunized and we've never been close to 50 percent (in Lane County)," said Davis. "Our highest is around 33 percent."

Reaching that 50 percent mark could prevent large-scale outbreaks like the one seen in Florence two years ago, Davis added.

Lane County immunization numbers are reflective of an overall Oregon trend, which has placed the state among the lowest flu vaccination rates in the country for at least 17 years, according to CDC data.

Flu vaccines are offered in most doctor's offices, clinics, health departments and pharmacies.

Because the virus can be spread through direct contact and airborne particles, health authorities recommend other preventive measures on top of getting the vaccine. Washing hands with soap and water, covering the mouth when coughing and sneezing and staying home from school or work when symptoms develop can all help diminish influenza's effects.

For more information, visit Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.

PLASTIC from page 1A

Coastal communities, like Florence, are especially vulnerable to plastic bag pollution because of the likelihood of some of those bags ending up in the Pacific Ocean and the Siuslaw River. Plastic waste, but especially single-use plastic bags, work their way through the food chain in the ocean as many sea creatures misidentify plastic as food.

Birds, fish and crustaceans then eat the bits and pieces of the different types of plastic that are deteriorating in waterways, with some dying as a direct result.

The City of Florence Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) is contemplating a recommendation that would codify a ban on single-use carryout plastic bags.

To assist in these deliberations, the city is asking for input from residents on the issue by offering a survey online that asks five questions related to plastic bag usage.

EMAC Chairwoman Maureen Miltenberger said she feels the time has come to consider the possibility of eliminating single-use plastic carry-out bags in Florence.

"If each one of us thought about where those bags would end up and the long-term impact each bag can have on streams, our ocean, storm drains, wildlife and our overall

environment, then taking the small action to purchase an inexpensive bag to use over and over again becomes one of the logical actions we can take," Miltenberger said.

EMAC's survey asks consumers about their shopping habits, preferences regarding bags and their willingness to support a ban on single-use bags. It also asks local business owners if they would support a ban and why or why not.

Florence Planning Director Wendy FarleyCampbell coordinates the work done by EMAC, which advises the city council and planning commission. She wants to encourage residents to take the survey to provide guidance as the city deliberates the issue.

"The plastic bags under consideration are the type used in grocery stores at checkout. It would not include produce bags, trash bags or paper bags," FarleyCampbell said.

In Oregon, major population centers like Eugene, Salem, Bend and Portland have passed regulations restricting the use of plastic bags.

Miltenberger believes that the recent action taken by the city to ban, over time, the use of styrofoam takeout containers provides a model that indicates residents may be ready to take another step in the direction of eliminating unnecessary waste from our landfills and waterways.

"We recently took the action to ban polystyrene, and during that process found that most businesses and customers were willing to do whatever it takes to help keep our rivers and land free of a substance that will take 500 years to forever to break down. In researching the life of plastic bags, we found the same to be true," Miltenberger said. "We are asking shoppers to consider making a one-time purchase of bags that can be used over and over again, and for stores to provide those bags. That does not seem dramatic to me. What does seem dramatic is the long-term effect that plastics have on our environment and what our world will be like for coming generations if we don't take some kind of action now."

There are other smaller municipalities, similar in size to Florence, that have instituted a complete ban or a surcharge on the single-use plastic bag. These smaller towns include Corvallis, Tigard, Lake Oswego, Beaverton and Ashland.

Nationally, California, Washington D.C., Seattle and Boston have adopted single-use plastic bag bans or fee plans. Internationally, the United Kingdom, China, Australia, Chile and Kenya have instituted either an outright ban or a fee for using a single-use plastic bag.

The Chinese government recently reported that plastic waste from single-use plastic bags has decreased by almost 70 percent since the introduction of the ban.

The City's EMAC survey will be open at ci.florence.or.us until Nov. 1.

Spirituali-Tea to discuss equality of men, women

Anyone interested in discussing diverse spiritual ideas in an atmosphere of respect and inquisitiveness is invited to join a group that meets Monday evenings at 875 Seventh St., beginning at 6:30 p.m.

This Monday's meeting will discuss the equality of men and women.

The equality of men and women is a fundamental Bahá'í principle, that is explicit in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the Bahá'í Faith. In the Bahá'í view, women have always been equal to men, and the reason why women have so far not achieved this equality is due to the lack of adequate educational and social opportunities, and because men have used their greater physical strength to prevent women from developing their true potential.

All thoughts and perspectives will be important to the group, so come prepared to share.

At the end of the gathering, prayer requests that have been left in the Prayer Pole in the garden of the Florence Playhouse, 208 Laurel St., will be read aloud.


Volunteer for Friends of Florence

The nonprofit Friends of Florence, which provides free bus transportation for cancer patients, is seeking volunteer drivers.

A commercial driver's license is not required.

For more info, call 541-997-8663.

Since the first trip to Eugene back in 1985, the Friends of Florence program has transported well over 30,000 patients, logging more than 1.3 million miles.



Florence Food Share provides food to those who are hungry in our community. If you have four hours a week available, we are in need of volunteers to staff our Front Desk and also act as Guides as clients walk through the pantry. Please call our volunteer coordinator, Sarah Lovejoy, @ 541-997-9110 (Monday - Friday, before noon) to learn more about volunteering. info@florence-foodshare.org 2190 Spruce Street.



Florence Habitat for Humanity ReStore is a place to put your talents to work. From customer service to furniture repair, we offer volunteer opportunities geared toward individual interests and skills. By giving your time, you help Florence Habitat ReStore do more to support building projects that benefit families in our community. 2016 Hwy 101 or email volunteer@florencehabitat.org Store hours 9am - 5pm Monday- Saturday 541-997-5834 www.facebook.com/restoreflorence

We are looking for new volunteers to join Friends of Florence Van Fans! Please join us at a meeting!

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