



*The Maryland State Medical Society*

**News: For Immediate Release**

Additional Information Contact:

Gene M. Ransom, CEO

Office: 410-539-0872 x 3305

## **DECEMBER 4-10 IS NATIONAL INFLUENZA VACCINATION WEEK**

BALTIMORE, Deember 5, 2016 — National Influenza Vaccination Week is a national observance that was established to highlight the importance of continuing influenza vaccination. Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness. Serious outcomes of flu infection can result in hospitalization or death. Some people, such as the elderly, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk for serious flu complications.

The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year. It is not possible to predict what this flu season will be like. Flu seasons are unpredictable in a number of ways. While flu spreads every year, the timing, severity, and length of the season usually varies from one season to another. Flu viruses are constantly changing so it's not unusual for new flu viruses to appear each year.

The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older as the first and most important step in protecting against this serious disease. While there are many different flu viruses, the seasonal flu vaccine is designed to protect against the main flu viruses that research suggests will cause the most illness during the upcoming flu season. People should begin getting vaccinated soon after flu vaccine becomes available. As long as flu viruses are spreading and causing illness, vaccination can still provide protection against the flu. Flu activity typically peaks between December and February in the United States, but the season can begin in the fall and can last as late as May.

MedChi President, Stephen Rockower, M.D., states "Vaccinations are a safe, easy, and painless way to help control disease, including the Flu. Everyone needs to do their part in helping to control the spread of disease. I already have gotten my shot. Now is the time to get yours!"

### About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org).