USNH Yokosuka soon to offer influenza vaccines

From USNH Yokosuka Public Affairs

With flu season right around the corner, U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Yokosuka is urging the community to take precautions and get vaccinated to prevent the spread of influenza this year.

Vaccination remains the single best method to prevent both catching and spreading the flu. Last year, flu vaccines provided protection against the two most common strains of seasonal influenza as well as H1N1. Two types of vaccines are available.

The "flu shot" an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) is given with a needle, usually in the arm. The flu shot is approved for use in people older than 6 months, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions.

The nasal-spray flu vaccine — a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that is given as a nasal spray (sometimes called LAIV for "Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine"). The viruses in the nasal spray vaccine do not cause the flu and is recommended for people 2 through 49 years of age who are not pregnant.

"I can't stress enough the importance of getting immunized." said USNH Yokosuka Director for Public Health Cmdr. Paul Brochu. "Flu vaccination is a proven and time tested way to prevent the spread of flu. By getting immunized, you're not just protecting yourself; you're protecting your family and the community at large."

While everyone should get a flu vaccine each flu season, it's especially important for those at high risk of having serious flu-related complications or for those who live with and care for people at high risk of developing flu-related complications. Those people include:

- Pregnant women
- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
- People 50 years of age and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- Health care workers
- Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu
- Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated)

In addition to getting vaccinated, there are other steps each and every person can take to prevent the spread of germs and viruses causing the flu.

- Avoid close contact with those who are sick, when you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- If possible, stay home from work, school and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

Photo courtesy of USNH Yokosuka Public Affairs

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- Wash your hands or use alcohol based hand sanitizer often to help protect you from germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his/her eyes, nose or mouth.

USNH Yokosuka recommends that everyone get their flu vaccine as soon as it is available. Dates, times and locations to receive your flu vaccine will be advertised soon once the vaccine is received. To learn about influenza, the vaccine and its benefits, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at http://www.cdc.gov/flu.

Full-price meal cost at DoDDS to increase for participants

From CNRJ Public Affairs

Beginning school year 2011-2012, the Department of Defense Dependent School (DoDDS) Student Meal Program will undergo a DoD-mandated three-year phased increase of meal prices at all overseas locations, including Navy Region Japan.

Participants who are currently paying full price for meals will see a 50-cent increase per meal the first year, followed by a 25-cent increase in each of the second and third years.

However, there will be no change for families qualifying for the Free and Reduced Meal Program.

During the 2011-2012 school year, school food authorities at DoDDS will charge elementary students $2.55 and secondary students $2.70 under the new pricing structure.

By the fall of 2013, elementary students who are paying full price for a school-provided lunch will be charged $3.05 and secondary students $3.20 in the third year of the increase.

Changes in the DoD Student Meal Program, mandated by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, are being phased-in over the three year period to minimize the financial impact on families.

The DoD Student Meal Program remains a subsidized USDA-approved and nutritious option for families with school-age children.

For more information on DoDDS meal programs, families are encouraged to contact their local school food service vendor or school administrators.

NAVSUP Yokosuka hosts U.S. VP's executive chef

By H. Sam Samuelson,
NAVSUP FLC Yokosuka Office of Corporate Communication

The Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Fleet Logistics Center (FLC) Yokosuka Food Management Team hosted a visit aboard Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka by the enlisted aide and executive chef to the vice president of the United States, Aug. 18.

Chief Culinary Specialist (SW) Thomas McNulty held meetings during his visit to recruit local Sailors for possible aide positions in Vice President Joseph Biden's vice presidential residence. Senior Chief Culinary Specialist (SW/AW) Todd S. Mears, NAVSUP FLC Yokosuka Food Management Team lead, was local point man for the meetings.

"Obviously, the vice president's schedule is very busy, so we worked hard to get the word out quickly for mid-grade level Sailors interested in these potential positions," said Mears.

Mears said the recruiting effort is not as rare as one might think.

"They actually do this a lot; as I recall, at least once a year in selected areas," he said. "I think the Navy has a lot of professional Sailors who might like a chance at an opportunity such as being selected for an aide position with the vice president."

Mears said he was honored to help his colleague and humbly downplayed his otherwise important support role for an aide to the vice president.

"I wanted to ensure we provided a good location and opportunities for local Sailors," he said. "There aren't a lot of ships on the waterfront, so I believe he'll be coming back.

"Chief McNulty was very approachable and professional," Mears added, "I was honored and proud to support him and the effort."