



OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR

Knox County Health Department
140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917-6413

September 12, 2014

Dear Parent,

In preparation for the upcoming in-school flu vaccination clinics, the Knox County Health Department would like you to know that we recently discovered the FluMist (intranasal) vaccine contains a small amount of porcine (pork) gelatin, a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved and medically-safe ingredient used in some vaccines. We rely on the vaccine manufacturers, FDA, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to provide information about medical concerns and reactions in vaccines, which typically does not require including all the ingredients and in this case did not mention porcine gelatin. We recognize that this ingredient may be of concern to some parents or guardians for religious reasons or because of dietary restrictions (i.e., vegetarians). We want you to be aware of this so you can make an informed decision regarding your child's health care.

Please note that the flu shot does not contain any porcine products and can be given to your child instead of FluMist if you choose. To make arrangements for this, please email SLVC@knoxcounty.org with "Porcine Exemption" in the subject line. Please include your cell phone number as well as your child's first and last name, school, and grade in the email so that we may follow up with you. No child will be vaccinated without a completed, signed and returned consent form, which can be obtained from your school or online at www.knoxcounty.org/health.

It's our understanding that porcine gelatin has been certified as "acceptable" by many multi-faith groups. Here are some resources for further review if this ingredient is of concern to you:

- Immunization Action Coalition: www.immunize.org/concerns/religious.asp and/or immunize.org
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration: www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/Vaccines
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/vaccines

If you have any questions or if you would like more information, please contact (865) 215-5150 or SLVC@knoxcounty.org.

Sincerely,

Dr. Martha Buchanan, Director
Knox County Health Department

John Lott, Director of Clinical Services
Knox County Health Department