



# Embassy of the United States of America Maputo · Mozambique



## American Citizens eNewsletter April 2009

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### NEED EXTRA PAGES IN YOUR U.S. PASSPORT?

If your U.S. passport is running low on blank visa pages and you don't live in Maputo you can send your passport, a completed and signed DS-4085 application and a prepaid return envelope via DHL or Sky Net to the Consular Section to have additional pages added. You can access the DS-4085 form using the Passport Wizard available on the U.S. Citizen Services page of the Embassy's website ([maputo.usembassy.gov](http://maputo.usembassy.gov)). You can also access the U.S. Citizen Services page from the Embassy's Facebook page.

### FOREIGN SERVICE EXAM TO BE OFFERED IN MAPUTO

The U.S. Embassy in Maputo will offer the Foreign Service exam in June 2009. To register for the exam or to learn more about becoming a Foreign Service Officer, visit <http://www.state.gov/careers/>.



### EMBASSY CLOSURES

The Embassy will be closed **Tuesday, April 7th** for Woman's Day and **Friday, May 1st** for Worker's Day.

### MOZAMBICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO STUDY IN U.S.

Five Mozambican high school students, between the ages of 16 and 18, will be spending the 2009-2010 school year living and studying in the U.S. The program is run through Youth Exchange and Study (YES) and the U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Section. YES students live with host families, attend school and participate in school and community activities. The Department of State's Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau and other organizations in the U.S. established the YES program to foster understanding between citizens of the U.S. and other countries. The five Mozambican students will depart in early August for their experience in the U.S.



## THE FLU SHOT — STILL YOUR BEST BET FOR AVOIDING INFLUENZA

Getting a flu shot often protects you from coming down with the flu. While a flu shot doesn't always provide total protection, it is still worth getting it. "Flu shot" vaccines are designed to protect against the strains of the flu virus expected to be in circulation this winter.



Influenza is a viral infection that causes illness in millions of people each year and can cause serious complications, especially in children and older adults. Fortunately, the flu vaccine offers protection against the flu.

### When is the Flu Vaccine Available?

The flu vaccine is generally offered between September and mid-November for the Northern Hemisphere and March to May for the Southern Hemisphere, which is typically before the late fall to early winter start of the flu season. However getting a flu shot even late in the season may still protect you. It takes up to two weeks to build immunity following a flu shot.

### What Kind of Protection Does the Flu Shot Offer?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a flu shot is between 70 and 90 percent effective in warding off illness in healthy people under age 65. In some cases, people who get a flu shot can still get the flu, but they may have a much less severe form of the illness and, most importantly, they will have a decreased risk of pneumonia, heart attack, stroke and death — to which older adults are especially vulnerable.

### Why Do You Need to Be Vaccinated Every Year?

The influenza virus changes from year to year. The flu vaccine you received last year was not designed to fight the virus strains in circulation this flu season.

### Who Should Get the Flu Vaccine?

Everyone who wishes to reduce the risk of getting influenza should get a flu shot. The CDC recommends the flu vaccine every year if you:

- Are age 6 months to 19 years;
- Are pregnant;
- Are 50 years old or older;
- Have a chronic medical condition such as asthma, diabetes, or heart, lung or kidney disease;
- Have a weakened immune system such as from medications or HIV infection; and/or
- Are a child or health care worker or live with or care for someone at high risk of flu complications.

### Who Shouldn't Get the Flu Shot?

Do not get a flu shot if you:

- Have had an allergic reaction to the vaccine in the past;
- Are allergic to chicken eggs;
- Developed Guillain-Barre syndrome, a serious autoimmune disorder affecting the nerves outside the brain and spinal cord, within six weeks of receiving the vaccine in the past; and/or
- Have a fever. Wait until your symptoms improve before being vaccinated.

### Why Do Children Need Two Doses of the Flu Vaccine?

Children younger than nine years require two doses of the flu vaccine if it is the first time they have been vaccinated for influenza. Children don't develop an adequate antibody level the first time they receive the vaccine and antibodies are what help fight the virus if it enters your child's system.



### Can I Lower My Risk Without Getting the Flu Shot?

With or without a flu shot you can take steps to help protect yourself from the flu and other viruses. Good hygiene remains your primary defense against contagious illnesses. Wash your hands thoroughly and often with soap and water or an alcohol-based sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth whenever possible. Avoid crowds when the flu is most prevalent in your area. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue available, use the crook of your arm instead of your hand.

### If You Already Had the Flu Can You Get It Again?

Once you've had the flu, you develop antibodies to the viral strain that caused it. Those antibodies won't protect you from new or mutated strains of influenza or other illnesses.

### Is There Any Medicine to Treat the Flu?

Antivirals help prevent the flu or reduce the severity and duration of the illness by a day or two. Antiviral medications are best taken within 48 hours of the onset of your symptoms and are available by prescription. Ask your doctor about getting a rapid flu test that can verify within a few hours whether you have the flu.

### The Best Tried and True Treatments for Treating the Flu Remain the Same

Get plenty of rest and fluids, and take acetaminophen (Tylenol or others) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin or others) for aches and pains.

#### NEW COUNTRY SPECIFIC INFORMATION FOR MOZAMBIQUE

The Department of State publishes Country Specific Information (CSI) on every country in the world. Mozambique's CSI was last updated January 29, 2009 and is available at [http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_976.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_976.html)

