

MEDIA RELEASE

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RE: Flu Season is Here- Protect Yourself and Get Vaccinated Today

Influenza (flu) has already been detected in Genesee County for this flu season. The flu is a contagious respiratory infection of the nose, throat and lungs caused by influenza viruses. Symptoms of the flu include fever, cough, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle ache, runny nose, and sore throat. Some people, such as older adults, young children, pregnant women, and people with certain chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease are at a high risk for serious flu complications. Vaccination remains the best protection against flu illness and is particularly important for people who are high risk. The Genesee County Health Department strongly recommends that everyone six months of age and older get a flu shot to reduce the spread of flu this holiday season and beyond.

People with the flu can spread it to others up to about 6 feet away. The flu viruses are spread mainly by droplets made when people with the flu cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby. Less often, a person might get the flu by touching a surface or object that has the flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth or nose.

Protect yourself and loved ones by taking action to prevent the flu. The Genesee County Health Department recommends the following:

1. Get vaccinated each year. The flu vaccine is widely available, including at the Genesee County Health Department.

2. Stay home when sick. Remain home until fever-free for at least 24 hours, without using fever reducing medication. A fever is defined as 100°F (37.8°C) or higher.
3. Wash hands often with soap and warm, running water for at least 20 seconds.
4. Cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
5. Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth. Doing so can allow the virus to enter your body.
6. Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects. The flu virus can “live” on some surfaces up to 24 hours.

Most people recover from the flu at home without medical assistance. If your symptoms persist or are severe, consult your family physician.

Emergency Warnings In Adults:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Not drinking enough fluids or not urinating
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

Emergency Warnings Signs In Children and Infants:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids or not urinating
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve, but then return with fever and a worse cough
- Fever with a rash

The Genesee County Health Department wants you to stay healthy this flu season. Visit our website at www.gchd.us or call 810.237.4569 or 810.237.4540 to make your flu shot appointment.

Genesee County Health Department. Your Health. Our Work.

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