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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

December 3, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stay Healthy for the Holidays—Get a Flu Vaccination

DUPAGE COUNTY—From December 1-7, 2019, the DuPage County Health Department is promoting Vaccinate Illinois Week, also observed as National Influenza Vaccination Week by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), reminding DuPage County residents that yearly influenza (flu) vaccination is recommended for anyone 6 months and older and it's not too late to get vaccinated. An annual flu vaccine is the best way to protect against this potentially serious disease.

For millions of people every season, flu means a fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, fatigue and miserable days spent in bed. Millions of people get sick, hundreds of thousands are hospitalized, and thousands to tens of thousands of people die from flu each year. Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctor visits, missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths. Flu vaccination also may make your illness less severe if you do get sick.

Despite the unpredictable nature of the flu, you should get the 2019-20 flu vaccine for optimal protection against the flu this season, because flu viruses are constantly changing. This season's vaccines have been updated to protect against the viruses that surveillance data indicate will be most common this flu season.

Getting vaccinated yourself protects people around you, including those who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people and people with certain chronic health conditions. People at high risk include pregnant women, children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old, people 65 years of age and older, and people who have certain long-term medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease.

While seasonal flu outbreaks can happen as early as October, flu activity is usually highest between December and February, though activity can last as late as May.

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As long as flu viruses are circulating, it's not too late to get vaccinated. It takes about two-weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body that protect against influenza virus infection. Flu vaccination is now widely available at doctors' offices and retail pharmacies.

In addition to getting a flu shot, take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Try to avoid close-contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, you should stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone (without the use of fever-reducing medicine) except to get medical care.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it and wash your hands.

Influenza antiviral drugs can be a second line of defense for treatment of some who get sick with flu and can lessen the duration and severity of symptoms. Antiviral drugs can also prevent serious flu complications, like pneumonia. For people at high risk of serious flu complications, check with your healthcare provider since prompt treatment with an antiviral drug can mean the difference between having a milder illness versus a very serious illness that could result in a hospital stay.

It's not too late to get a flu vaccine to help protect yourself and your loved ones against flu. Use the [HealthMap](#) Vaccine Finder to find a location that offers the flu vaccine.

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