



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Karen E. Timberlake, Secretary

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Immunize Now for Protection Against Influenza

As local health departments and health care providers begin hosting flu shot clinics, state health officials are encouraging people to get immunized against influenza before the coming winter season.

“Now’s the time to get immunized since influenza activity usually begins in November and there’s plenty of vaccine to go around,” said Secretary Karen Timberlake. “We urge those who are at increased risk for developing complications from influenza to get the vaccine, which includes children 6 months through 18 years old, adults older than 50, and those with compromised immune systems.”

Contact your health care provider or local health department to be immunized. Influenza vaccination is recommended for:

- Healthy children 6 months through 18 years of age
- Persons age 50 or older
- Women who are or will be pregnant during the influenza season
- Children and adolescents who are receiving long term aspirin therapy
- Persons 6 months of age or older with compromised immune systems including those with heart or lung problems, cancer or immunologic disorders, AIDS and related conditions, kidney disease, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, anemia, and asthma
- People who live with individuals that are high risk to the complications of influenza
- Health care workers

A new immunization is needed each year because a new vaccine is developed for each season as influenza viruses change. Influenza activity in Wisconsin usually begins in November and peaks in early February. Although the last several influenza seasons were relatively mild, the severity of influenza outbreaks each season cannot be predicted. Even relatively mild influenza seasons are associated with thousands of hospitalizations and hundreds of deaths.

The symptoms and complications of influenza are more severe than those of a cold. Influenza viruses infect the respiratory tract (nose, throat, and lungs). The disease usually begins suddenly and symptoms typically include fever, headache, malaise (a feeling of being ill and without energy), cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, and body aches. Influenza should not be confused with the "stomach flu" that usually involves symptoms of vomiting and diarrhea.

For more information, visit:

- Influenza Fact Sheet: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/factsheets/Influenza.htm>
- Local Public Health Department Listing: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/localhealth>

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