

NEWS RELEASE

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Influenza Prevention is a Priority

McCook – Flu in August? Influenza usually peaks in January and February but can occur throughout the year. There are many different strains of influenza. The CDC recommends influenza vaccination for everyone 6 months and older. The CDC further recommends that the flu vaccine be given as early as the serum is made available to providers and there is no need to have a booster later on in the season.

“It seems early in the season but not too early to take preventative measures,” states Jamey Keen, Public Health Nurse for Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department. “We have influenza vaccine available in our office to those who are interested. Prevention is key, and getting the flu vaccination is one important measure for prevention. Parents can also play a pivotal role in prevention of influenza by accurately calling in the symptoms of their children’s illness to the schools when reporting an absence and not dosing your child with Tylenol, or another fever-reducing medication, and then dropping the child off at school. The same prevention methods can be practiced by adults too. Don’t go to work or to the grocery store if you suspect you are sick or have the flu. Remember to cover your cough with a tissue or cough into your inner elbow, and wash your hands frequently. Help children, and remind them, to properly wash their hands frequently as well. Other measures include avoiding close contact with people who have symptoms and avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Practicing personal measures such as getting plenty of rest, reducing stress, exercising and eating right can also help with prevention of illness.”

Some people should not get vaccinated until they have consulted with their primary healthcare provider and includes:

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs.
- People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination in the past.
- People who developed Guillian-Barre Syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of getting an influenza vaccine previously.
- Children younger than 6 months of age (influenza vaccine is not approved for use in this age group).
- People who have a moderate or severe illness with a fever should wait to get vaccinated until their symptoms lessen.

If you have questions, or are unsure, contact your primary healthcare provider.

Fast flu facts include:

- It takes approximately 2 weeks to receive complete immunity from influenza after getting the vaccine.
- It is possible to pass the flu virus to others (be contagious) one day before the fever and up to 5 or more days after.
- Flu season typically peaks in February.
- Now is a good time to get vaccinated.

- Vaccination is particularly important for people with underlying health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and chronic illnesses.
- For some people, catching the flu could be deadly.

We are currently offering influenza vaccines to those interested and encourage you to call or stop by. In addition, we offer on-site vaccination clinics at worksites and in communities. For those interested, or for more information, please contact Jamey Keen, Public Health Nurse, at 308-345-4223.

We are located one block North of Arby's at 404 West 10th, McCook. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow Counties. You can also find us at www.swhealth.ne.gov, on Facebook or follow us on Twitter.

SYMPTOM	COLD	FLU	GI (GASTROINTESTIONAL)
Fever	Rare	Usual; high (100-102 F)	Rare
Headache	Rare	Common	Rare
General aches, pains	Slight	Usual; often severe	Sometimes
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual; up to 2-3 weeks	Sometimes
Extreme exhaustion	Never	Usual, at beginning	Rare
Stuffy Nose	Common	Sometimes	Rare
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes	Rare
Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes	Rare
Chest Discomfort, Cough	Mild-Moderate hacking cough	Common, can be severe	Rare
Vomiting and/or nausea	Rare	Rare	Common
Stomach ache, pain	Rare	Rare	Common
Diarrhea	Rare	Rare	Common; defined as more than 6 stools in a 24 hour period.

Contact SOUTHWEST NEBRASKA PUBLIC HEALTH DEPT. @ 308-345-4223
 or go to the CDC site for more information: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

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