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HEALTH
DEPARTMENT
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Health Department of Northwest Michigan Urges Residents to Help Stop the Spread of the Flu

HARBOR SPRINGS, Mich. – As the flu virus begins to spread across Northern Michigan this holiday season, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan is urging residents to get a flu shot in order to protect themselves and their community.

“People in Northern Michigan should get a flu shot as soon as they can. The vaccine takes about two weeks after administered to fully protect you. With more traveling and interaction around the holidays, individuals and families should visit the Health Department, their primary care doctor or a pharmacy soon to get the vaccine,” Medical Director Dr. Josh Meyerson said.

Everybody needs a flu vaccine every year, Meyerson says. Without the vaccine, individuals are at a significantly higher risk of contracting the flu, which is a contagious respiratory illness. Symptoms can include fever, body aches, and fatigue that can last up to two weeks, leading to missed work and chances to be with family and friends over the holidays. The flu can also lead to hospitalization and has caused dozens of deaths in recent years across Michigan.

Mike Swain, Public Information Officer at the Health Department wants residents to know that everyone has a role to play in stopping the spread of the flu: “While pregnant women, seniors, parents and those with asthma and diabetes are at a higher risk of serious complications, everyone is at risk of contracting the flu. By getting the flu shot this year, you’ll protect not only yourself but also your neighbors and loved ones who may be at a higher risk.”

Infants under the age of six months are at high risk for severe illness from the flu, but are too young to be vaccinated for influenza. According to Meyerson, “the best way to protect infants is vaccinate everyone around them.”

Flu shots are available at Health Department locations in Bellaire, Charlevoix, Harbor Springs and Gaylord. Call the Health Department of Northwest Michigan today at (800) 432-4121 to schedule an appointment. Most insurances are accepted at the Health Department and flu shots do not require a copay. Those who are uninsured should also call the Health Department to learn how to receive the flu shot. The flu shot is easy to get, safe and can protect the health of Northern Michigan residents and communities.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego Counties.

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