



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Tom Schlueter (630) 444-3098

(630) 417-9729 cell

## **Flu season is here: Protect yourself, get vaccinated**

Autumn is the beginning of the flu season and now is a good time to think about how you are going to protect yourself and your family. The Kane County Health Department encourages all residents to take the time to get a flu vaccine. Getting a yearly flu vaccination is the first and most important step in protecting yourself against the flu.

To find the nearest location of a flu shot provider, simply visit the Health Department's Web site to find a map of those providers in Kane County [www.kanehealth.com/flu\\_shots.htm](http://www.kanehealth.com/flu_shots.htm). And, in addition to all the resources available on the Department's "Stop the Flu: It Starts with You" Web site [www.kanehealth.com/flu.htm](http://www.kanehealth.com/flu.htm), we will be posting regular updates on our [Facebook](#) and Twitter ([KaneCoHealth](#)) pages throughout the flu season.

"The flu is a preventable disease and getting a flu shot is the best way to protect yourself and your family, which cuts down on doctor visits and the number of days you call in sick to work and/or school," said Paul Kuehnert, Executive Director. "Even healthy people can get the flu and it can be serious."

Just like last year, beginning in October the Health Department will be providing weekly updates of influenza-like illness activity in Kane County on our Web site. Schools, hospitals and laboratories will be able to provide an up-to-date picture of the activity through reports from parents, emergency room visits and lab test results.

Of course there are other ways to help stop the spread of the flu. You've heard of the Three C's? They really work: Cover your cough, Clean your hands and Contain the disease by staying home if you're sick. Ensuring you stick to a healthy diet and get plenty of rest and exercise throughout the flu season will help maintain your immunity.

(MORE)

This year's vaccine is geared toward three different influenza viruses and, no, you can't get the flu from the flu shot. Over decades of use by hundreds of millions of people just like you, the vaccines have proven to be safe and effective.

With just a few exceptions, everyone over the age of 6 months, adults 65 years of age and older and pregnant women, should get an annual seasonal flu vaccination. While it is important for children younger than 5 to get vaccinated, it is even more so for children younger than 2 years old. Those with [chronic medical conditions](#) also are at high risk for the flu.

The exceptions are: those with a severe allergy to chicken eggs, have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination, children younger than 6 months of age and those who have a moderate-to-severe illness with a fever (they should wait until they recover to get vaccinated.) People with a history of [Guillain-Barré Syndrome](#) should consult with their doctor to decide whether the vaccine is recommended for them.

You can choose to receive your vaccination in one of two ways. The "flu shot" is an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle, usually in the arm. The flu shot is approved for use in people older than 6 months, including pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions. A high-dose flu shot has been approved for people 65 and older. If you're the kind of person who doesn't like "shots," the nasal-spray flu vaccine is made with live, weakened flu viruses given as a nasal spray (sometimes called LAIV for "Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine"). Again, the viruses in the nasal spray vaccine do not cause the flu. LAIV is approved for use in healthy people 2 through 49 years of age who are not pregnant.

Do you have more questions about the flu? Both the Kane County Health Department's [Web site](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) have a wealth of information available just a click away.

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