



Press Release

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Media Contact: Deanna Durica, cell 708-359-1005 and email ccdphmedia@cookcountyhhs.org

Stay healthy this flu season by getting a flu shot.

Seasonal influenza, or flu, is a contagious respiratory virus that can cause mild to severe illness. The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) and Cook County Health & Hospitals System (CCHHS) recommend everyone 6 months of age and older receive a flu shot.

“The best way to protect against the flu is by getting an annual flu vaccine,” said CCDPH Chief Operating Officer Dr. Terry Mason. “Flu can be particularly dangerous for the elderly or those with chronic illness, but everyone should get vaccinated each year to protect themselves and others.”

“Influenza vaccination is the most effective way to prevent getting the flu. This means fewer missed work and school days. It can also help keep infants less than 6 months old safe if their care givers are vaccinated. And from what we know about flu this season, our vaccine is a good match with the flu virus that is circulating. So getting vaccinated is a win-win all around,” added Dr. Sharon Welbel, CCHHS Director of Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Control.

Symptoms of the flu virus include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches and fatigue. The flu virus is spread primarily when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

In addition to getting vaccinated, residents should practice the three C’s to limit the spread of any illness:

- Clean – properly wash your hands frequently
- Cover – cover your cough and sneeze
- Contain – contain your germs by staying home if you are sick

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending the use of injectable vaccine, which include inactivated influenza vaccines and recombinant influenza vaccines, for all people age 6 months and older. **The CDC does not recommend use of the nasal spray influenza vaccine during 2016-2017.** For more information about flu vaccine types, visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm

For flu vaccine, contact your primary care provider, local pharmacy, Cook County Health and Hospitals System (CCHHS) hospitals and health centers at www.cookcountyhhs.org/locations/ or use the CDC Vaccine Finder at cookcountypublichealth.org/communicable-diseases/flu. Watch for CCDPH seasonal influenza updates on our website at cookcountypublichealth.org, Facebook (facebook.com/ccdph) and Twitter (twitter.com/cookcohealth).

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