

DATE: November 21, 2022
TO: DeKalb County News Media
FROM: DeKalb County Health Department (DCHD)
Northwestern Medicine

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Local Influenza Activity on a Rise

Cases of influenza activity are significantly rising throughout the state, including in DeKalb County. In 2021, there were 78 influenza like illnesses (ILI) reported by Northwestern Medicine's Emergency Department from October 31st through November 13th. This year there have been more than double the influenza like illnesses reported (181 reports) during that same time frame.

With the substantial increase in cases, it's important to know you can still get the flu vaccine for yourself and family members. Getting an annual flu vaccine before the holidays is the best way to protect yourself and your family from flu. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) vaccination has been shown to have many benefits including reducing the risk of flu illness and hospitalization.

Ways to help you and your family prevent the flu:

- Get an annual flu vaccine.
- Wash hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces often.
- Use proper hygiene etiquette by coughing into your elbow instead of your hands; avoid close contact with people who are sick and if you are sick stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone.
- Take antiviral medication if your doctor prescribes them.

Locally, there are many opportunities to receive the flu vaccine:

DeKalb County Health Department

The Health Department provides flu vaccines for adults and children starting at 6 months of age, with no appointments needed Monday-Friday from 8 am to 4pm.

A parent or guardian must accompany individuals under 18 years of age. Most PPO insurance plans, Medicaid, and Medicare Part B are accepted with no cost to the client. Please bring all insurance cards and a photo ID. DCHD is a Vaccine for Children (VFC) Provider.

Northwestern Medicine

Please contact your primary care provider for information about the flu vaccine at Northwestern Medicine. In addition, Northwestern Medicine Immediate Care Sycamore offers flu vaccines Tuesdays through Saturdays from 11 am to 2 pm to patients age 3 years and older. High dose flu shots are available for people age 65 years and older. Please bring all insurance cards and a photo ID.

Flu vaccines can also be found at <https://www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines/>

To learn more about flu vaccinations, visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/index.html>

<https://health.dekalbcounty.org/services/flu-vaccinations/> or

<https://www.nm.org/conditions-and-care-areas/flu>

For more information about the DeKalb County Health Department services, visit

<https://health.dekalbcounty.org/> or follow us on social media. For more information about

Northwestern Medicine location and hours, visit <https://www.nm.org/>

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