



MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Your public health team, connecting with our communities to achieve healthier outcomes

Submitted by: Leslie Kinnee, Public Information Officer
615 N. State St., Stanton, MI 48888-9702
989-831-3669, kinnee@mmdhd.org

www.mmdhd.org



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It's not too late to get the flu vaccine

Ithaca, Stanton, St. Johns- It's all over the news and social media. People are talking about it and doctor's offices are filling up with patients complaining about it. The "it" is the flu and it's spreading rapidly across the country, including here at home.

We all know that the flu can cause high fever, chills, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose and muscle aches. And we know it can make you quite miserable and put you out of commission for up to a week. But this year's flu virus seems especially aggressive, which is why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) are urging everyone over six months of age to get vaccinated.

Vaccination is especially important for those at high-risk for developing serious flu complications. Those most at-risk include young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.

While the flu vaccine isn't 100% effective, it remains our best defense. And when you get vaccinated, you are not just protecting yourself, but these high-risk groups as well.

Some people think it's too late to get vaccinated, but that's not the case. The vaccine is effective throughout the entire flu season, which can last as late as May. But it does take up to two weeks for the body to build up defenses against the virus after being vaccinated, so it's best not to wait.

Some people think they'll get the flu if they get vaccinated. This is also not true. While some people do experience nasal congestion and a runny nose after getting vaccinated, the symptoms are mild and go away quickly.

Getting the flu vaccine has never been more convenient. The vaccine is available at a variety of places, including your doctor's office, many pharmacies, or the health department.

Mid-Michigan District Health Department offers the standard flu shot, the high-dose flu shot for those 65 and older, and preservative-free options. The health department participates with the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. It can also bill many types of insurance, including Medicare Part B, which will cover the entire cost for seniors.

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2- It's not too late to get the flu vaccine

To schedule an appointment at the health department, or to find out if we participate with your insurance, call 989-224-2195 in Clinton County, 989-875-3681 in Gratiot County and 989-831-5237 in Montcalm County.

In addition to getting vaccinated, there are many other ways you can protect yourself and your family from getting sick. First, wash your hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer. Make sure to clean common surfaces and objects often that may be contaminated with germs. You should also try to avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. If you know someone who is sick, avoid close contact with them. If you are sick, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and be sure to stay home so you don't infect others.

If you do get the flu, call your doctor if your symptoms get worse or if you have shortness of breath or worsening cough or congestion.

Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.
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