

NEWS RELEASE

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National Influenza Vaccination Week Highlights the Importance of Flu Vaccination

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) reminds all North Dakotans of the importance of receiving the flu vaccine as part of National Influenza Vaccination Week, observed Dec. 4-10, 2016.

“Everyone 6 months and older should be vaccinated, regardless of age or health status,” said Lexie Barber, Immunization Surveillance Coordinator with the NDDoH. Despite FluMist® not being recommended this year, there is still plenty of flu vaccine available.

Certain individuals are at greater risk for complications from the flu and are especially encouraged to be vaccinated. These include young children, older adults, those with compromised immune systems or chronic health conditions, pregnant women, Native Americans, or Alaskan Natives. Those who spend time around anyone who is high risk is especially encouraged to be vaccinated because it is possible for healthy individuals to become infected and pass the flu on to their friends and family without even showing symptoms.

So far this season, influenza activity has been sporadic, with 55 laboratory-identified cases reported to the state so far. Influenza can be unpredictable, and activity could increase at any time. People who have not had their influenza vaccine yet this season should get it as soon as possible, as it takes about two weeks for the vaccine to provide full protection. For information about vaccine availability, people should contact their local public health unit, healthcare provider, or pharmacist. For information about influenza, visit www.ndflu.com.

REMEMBER: The flu vaccine can protect not only you but everyone around you.

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