

NEWS RELEASE

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Spread Holiday Cheer, not the Flu

BISMARCK, N.D. – During National Influenza Vaccination Week, December 3-9, 2017, the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) is reminding all North Dakotans to get the flu vaccine before the holidays.

“Everyone 6 months and older should be vaccinated, regardless of age or health status,” said Lexie Barber, immunization surveillance coordinator with the NDDoH. “Anyone can get the flu, including healthy individuals, and getting the flu vaccine is the easiest way to protect yourself, as well as your friends and family.”

It is especially important for people who are at greater risk of complications from the flu to be vaccinated. This includes young children, older adults, those with compromised immune systems or chronic health conditions, pregnant women, American Indians, or Alaskan Natives. It is also important for those who spend time around anyone who is high risk for complications from flu to be vaccinated, because healthy individuals can become infected and pass the flu to their friends and family without showing any symptoms.

This season, influenza activity has begun early, with 196 laboratory-identified cases reported to the NDDoH so far this season. 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, health care 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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