



Health Division continues to encourage flu vaccinations

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For Immediate Release



HEALTH DIVISION

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NEWS RELEASE

L. BROOKS PATTERSON, OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Leigh-Anne Stafford, MSA

Health Officer

Health Division continues to encourage flu vaccinations

Feb. 6, 2019, Pontiac, Mich. – Oakland County Health Division (OCHD) continues to strongly encourage residents to take action and get vaccinated against flu in the wake of two adult flu-associated deaths in Oakland County. OCHD has received reports of over 1,300 confirmed flu cases since the season officially began on October 7, 2018.

“My heart goes out to the families,” said Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson. “This is an unfortunate reminder that influenza can be a very serious illness, especially for those at higher risk of complications”.

The Health Division recommends everyone over the age of six months receive an influenza vaccination and take preventive actions, such as washing your hands often with soap and water, covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and staying home when sick.

“I strongly urge everyone who is able to get a flu shot to protect themselves and those around them,” said Leigh-Anne Stafford, health officer for OCHD. “Getting an annual flu shot decreases the risk of getting the flu. It also helps decrease severity of illness, minimizes complications, and protects the entire community, especially those who are

unable to get a flu shot.”

Vulnerable individuals are at greater risk of getting the flu, which can be a life-threatening illness. Those who are at a higher risk of flu complications are:

- Children younger than 5 years old
- Pregnant women
- Older adults
- Those with chronic medical conditions

Those who live, work, or interact with higher-risk populations are recommended to get the flu vaccine to protect those who are more at risk. This year’s vaccine protects against Type A H1N1, H3N2, and two Type B strains which are most likely to occur this season.

The flu virus can spread to others as far as six feet away, mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. Less often, a person may also get the flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own eyes, nose, or mouth.

The flu usually occurs suddenly and can cause mild to severe illness and sometimes lead to death. Symptoms of the flu include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children than adults)

Flu shots are available at Health Division offices in Pontiac and Southfield on Mondays, 8:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Tuesdays through Fridays, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Appointments are available daily. Clients that walk in without an appointment will be offered the next available appointment time. Flu shots may also be available through your physician and at select pharmacies.

Flu shots cost \$30. The high-dose flu shot recommended for those 65 years and older is \$57 and is covered by Medicare. Payment options include cash, credit (American Express, Discover, MasterCard, Visa), Medicare, Medicaid, and some insurance.

Credit card fees apply. Please bring picture identification and all insurance cards to the clinic. OCHD participates in the Vaccines for Children Program. No one will be denied access to services due to inability to pay; there is a discounted/sliding fee schedule available.

For up-to-date information or to make an appointment, visit www.oakgov.com/health; follow the Health Division on Facebook, Pinterest, and Twitter @publichealthOC; or call the Health Division's Flu Shot Hotline at 800-434-3358. Nurse on Call is also available to answer questions at 800-848-5533.

FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES ONLY: Please contact Leigh-Anne Stafford, Health Officer, Oakland County Health Division, at 248-858-1410.



NURSE ON CALL PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION HOTLINE

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