



# NEWS

R E L E A S E

Illinois Department of Public Health

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Flu Activity in Illinois Increasing

*Not too late to get a flu shot*

**SPRINGFIELD** – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is reporting flu activity has increased to the “regional level”, meaning many regions in Illinois are reporting recent laboratory confirmed influenza. The most recent surveillance data shows an increase in influenza activity in Illinois, but the flu is not yet widespread.

“Although each influenza season is unpredictable, we typically see the peak in January and February,” said Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Damon T. Arnold. “It is not too late to get a flu shot. Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself, and those around you, from getting influenza and potentially becoming sick for a week or longer.”

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is reporting an ample supply of influenza vaccine nationwide. The flu vaccine is available at many locations throughout Illinois, including local health departments, doctor’s offices, pharmacies and health clinics.

Both the IDPH and the CDC recommend everyone six months and older receive the flu vaccine. People at high risk of serious influenza complications, including young children; pregnant women; people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease; and people 65 years and older, should make getting vaccinated a priority.

Flu symptoms can include:

- fever (usually high)
- headache
- extreme tiredness
- dry cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- muscle aches

-more-

Although stomach illness, such as vomiting and diarrhea can occur, it is not typical of influenza. Stomach illness is usually the result of a gastrointestinal illness such as norovirus or food poisoning.

Washing your hands is another important step you can take to avoid getting influenza or other viruses, like norovirus. Wash your hands with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based product.

To reduce the spread of influenza, it is also important to practice the 3 C's –

- **Clean** – properly wash your hands frequently
- **Cover** – cover your cough and sneeze
- **Contain** – contain your germs by staying home if you are sick

For more information, log onto [www.idph.state.il.us/flu/index.htm](http://www.idph.state.il.us/flu/index.htm).

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