

MEDIA RELEASE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 11, 2021

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Flu vaccinations recommended this October

Erie, PA — The Erie County Department of Health highly recommends that the public get their flu vaccination for the 2021-22 season, ideally before the end of October. Flu vaccine is readily available and appropriate for all Erie County residents ages six months and older, unless they are allergic to it.

Flu is a respiratory illness that spreads easily. It is caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death.

“Getting a flu vaccine prevents the severe symptoms, shortens the amount of time that someone is sick, and lessens the likelihood of hospitalization in case you are infected,” said Charlotte Berringer, director of community health services. “It also helps protect your family, friends, co-workers and all those you may come into contact with this season,”

This year, both the flu shot and the nasal spray are available at pharmacies, from your primary care provider or at community clinics. Health care professionals can discuss what the best vaccine is for you.

Difference between flu and COVID-19

Although the flu and COVID-19 are both respiratory viruses that spread from person to person, they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by a coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2 and flu is caused by influenza viruses.

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue or tiredness, and for some people, vomiting and diarrhea.

Similarly, COVID-19 symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell.

Because the flu and COVID-19 have some similar symptoms, getting tested can help confirm a diagnosis and determine appropriate care. Erie County currently has a high rate of COVID-19 transmission, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), therefore, it is recommended all people, including those who are fully vaccinated, should wear masks indoors.

Contact the Erie County Department of Health at 814-451-6700 or ecdhinfo@eriecountypa.gov.

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