



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

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Flu Season Is Here - Vaccine Is Effective, Available
Wisconsin influenza cases increased significantly over the last two weeks

Madison— Preliminary data show this season’s flu vaccine is nearly 60 percent effective, according to an announcement today by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“What this means is that those who have gotten an influenza vaccine shot are well protected against the illness, and for those who haven’t, there is plenty of vaccine available, and it’s not too late to get a flu shot,” said Karen McKeown, the State Health Officer.

Cases of influenza in Wisconsin have increased significantly over the last two weeks. There are currently over 346 hospitalizations, with more expected. Most of the cases have been reported in the southeastern part of the state, though the entire state is seeing some flu activity.

“We are especially concerned by the number of pregnant women who have been hospitalized with influenza,” McKeown said. “Pregnant women should ask their obstetricians about getting a flu vaccine at any time during their pregnancy.”

The flu vaccine is safe and effective for people 6 months old and older, and not only protects the person who gets the vaccine, but also the people around them. For those who do get sick after getting a flu shot, symptoms are often milder than they would have been if they had not been vaccinated.

In addition to the flu vaccine, some common-sense health routines can help a person prevent illness.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your upper sleeve, and try to avoid touching your face with your hand. If you use a tissue, throw it away after one use.
- Use your own drinking cups and straws.
- Avoid being exposed to people who are sick with flu-like symptoms.
- Eat nutritious meals, get plenty of rest and do not smoke.
- Frequently clean commonly touched surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, refrigerator handle, telephone, faucets).
- If you’re ill, stay home, get rest, drink plenty of liquids and avoid using alcohol and tobacco.

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