

News Release



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Flu cases increase in Knox County

The Knox County Health Department reports confirmed cases of influenza have increased in Knox County during the past month with 10 hospitalizations since the beginning of the year. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) reports that flu activity is widespread throughout Ohio.

Health department officials say it is not too late to get a flu shot. The health department still has flu vaccine as do most local retail pharmacies and doctor's offices. There are no flu vaccine shortages across Ohio at this time. To schedule a flu shot at the health department, call 740-399-8008.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone six months of age and older get a flu shot as it is the best protection against seasonable flu viruses. It takes about two weeks for a flu shot to take full effect.

Flu activity typically peaks between December and February, but can last until May. There have been 1,832 flu-associated hospitalizations reported in Ohio so far this flu season. ODH reported the state's first pediatric death due to influenza on Wednesday.

Symptoms of influenza can include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Health officials recommend that if you are sick with the flu, stay home from work or school to prevent spreading it to others.

Although most people fully recover from the flu, some experience severe illness like pneumonia and respiratory failure, and the flu can sometimes be fatal. People who think that they may have the flu and are pregnant, have an underlying medical condition or who are extremely ill should contact their healthcare provider.

While vaccination provides the greatest protection against the flu, other effective ways to avoid getting or spreading it include: washing hands frequently or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer; covering coughs and sneezes with tissues, or coughing or sneezing into elbows; avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth; and staying home when sick and until fever-free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication.