



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

1555 North 17th Avenue
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www.weldhealth.org



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Flu Vaccination Best Defense Against Illness

WELD COUNTY, CO — Last year, the Colorado influenza (flu) season was the worst on record for outbreaks and hospitalizations. Over 4,650 Coloradoans were hospitalized for influenza and one baby died. As the weather turns colder and more people are spending time inside, the risks for influenza infection continue to increase. Public health and healthcare professionals are recommending anyone over 6 months of age to get vaccinated. “An annual flu vaccination is one of your best defenses against getting sick from influenza,” says Mark E. Wallace, MD MPH, Executive Director of the Weld County Health Department. “The flu is highly contagious and different from a cold.” Flu symptoms can start suddenly and may include fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, body aches, or fatigue. Serious cases of influenza can require hospitalization and may lead to death.

Statewide surveillance for the influenza season began on September 30, 2018 and will run through May 18, 2019. The current rate of infection for the flu is very low, with only a few reported hospitalizations and no deaths. However, public health officials stress that the flu season is just beginning, and the number of sick can quickly escalate. “Now is the perfect time to get your annual flu shot,” said Wallace, “Before a wave of illness begins in the community.”

The Health Department recommends an annual flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older as the first and most important step in protecting against this serious illness. While there are many different strains of the flu virus, the flu vaccine is designed to protect against the main strains that research indicates will cause the most illness during the influenza season. The flu vaccine is available at pharmacies, medical providers, and the Health Department.

Dr. Wallace further recommends people always cover their coughs, wash their hands, and if people get sick with the flu, to stay home from work or school to prevent spreading the illness to others. The Health Department also recommends people keep their immune system healthy by eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, getting outdoor physical activity, and adequate sleep.

The Health Department has two locations to serve the public: the main office in Greeley (1555 North 17th Avenue), and a Southwest Weld satellite office (4209 County Road 24 ½ near Hwy 119 and I-25 in Longmont. To schedule a flu vaccination at either location, please call (970) 304-6420.

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