



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
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First Influenza Case Confirmed in Wisconsin

People Encouraged to Get Flu Shot

State health officials are reminding people across the state to get their influenza vaccine as the first influenza case is announced for the 2008-09 season. A school-age child from Kenosha County is the first confirmed case of influenza among Wisconsin residents.

“This laboratory confirmed case indicates that influenza has arrived in Wisconsin and serves as a reminder to everyone to get their flu shot if they haven’t already done so,” said Department Secretary Karen Timberlake. “Getting a flu shot is the most effective way to avoid getting the flu.”

To get your flu shot, contact your health care provider, local public health department or tribal health clinic. The flu season for Wisconsin generally runs from November to March, with peak activity around early February. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, influenza vaccine will continue to be shipped to Wisconsin throughout the flu season.

“There is still time for the vaccine to be effective and help prevent complications that can be caused by the flu, such as pneumonia or hospitalization,” Timberlake said.

Influenza is a contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus. “Flu” illness ranges from very mild to severe cases, and in some instances, can cause life-threatening complications. Influenza symptoms typically appear 1-3 days after exposure to respiratory droplets from an infected person and include fever, headache, dry cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, body aches and/or tiredness.

Some ways to stay healthy and to protect yourself and those around you from getting the flu:

- ✓ Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ✓ Cover your cough or sneeze with your upper sleeve. 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.
- ✓ Stay home when you are sick.
- ✓ Eat nutritious meals, get plenty of rest and do not smoke.
- ✓ Frequently clean commonly touched surfaces (i.e., door knobs, refrigerator handle, telephone, faucets).
- ✓ If you think you have the flu, stay home, get rest, drink plenty of liquids and avoid using alcohol and tobacco. If your symptoms persist, contact your doctor.

To learn more about influenza, visit <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/influenza/index.htm>.

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