

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Protect your family and community—get a flu shot

With a new flu season, health officials are reminding people of the toll last year's season took on individuals, and encouraging everyone to get a flu shot to protect their families, communities, and themselves.

"The dangers of the flu are real, especially for the very young, for older adults, and for those with other health problems," said Director of Health, Phyllis D. Ellis "Getting a flu shot helps to protect not only you, but also your loved ones, friends, and neighbors, and this year we are asking everyone to pitch in and help."

Getting your flu shot can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations. Receiving your flu vaccination if you are healthy helps to prevent illness in our most vulnerable populations as well. People at higher risk for flu-related complications include children ages newborn to five, adults over the age of 65, pregnant women and people who have existing medical conditions such as asthma.

The flu vaccine is recommended for everyone six months and older, including pregnant women. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for your body to develop protection against the flu.

Here are other simple steps to help you avoid spreading the flu and other viruses:

- 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.
- 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 are sick, stay home, rest, drink plenty of liquids, and avoid using alcohol and tobacco.
- See a health care provider if your symptoms persist or get worse.

Influenza numbers for the season will be updated weekly beginning October 6, 2018, and can be found at <http://www.ocgov.net/health/flu>

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"PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF ONEIDA COUNTY"

