



# ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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"PROMOTING & PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF ONEIDA COUNTY"

OCGOV.NET/HEALTH

## News Release

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For Immediate Release

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## **Keep Healthy for the Holidays** *Oneida County Health Department Urges Community to be Proactive*

Cooler weather is approaching, and the holiday season is right around the corner. With that comes more time indoors and gatherings with friends and family. Be proactive and take some simple steps to keep you and your family healthy and avoid illness.

Practice good hand hygiene. Washing your hands is one of the most effective ways to stay healthy. Soap and water work best but hand sanitizer will do when soap and water is not available. Spend 20 seconds washing and scrubbing your hands and make sure to get the back of your hands, your fingers, and fingernails. Your hands should be washed after using the bathroom, before eating and handling/preparing food, when touching animals, when you are sick and any other time they become dirty.

Stay home if you are sick. Health experts are cautioning a worse than average flu season compounded by COVID illness. Additionally, there are already high levels of RSV in children in parts of the country. If you have symptoms of any of these illnesses, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or others, talk to your health care provider and get tested.

Get the Flu shot. Influenza is already widespread throughout New York State. Flu season generally starts in the fall and peaks in the winter months. In Oneida County, as of October 22, 2022, 27 people have tested positive with the flu. The flu shot is the best protection against serious illness and are available to ages 6 months and older. Flu shots are widely available at the Oneida County Health Department as well as widely available throughout the community. To find a location near you, visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines/>.

Stay up to date with COVID-19 boosters. Bivalent COVID-19 boosters are available to people aged five and older who have received their first COVID-19 vaccine series at least two months prior. This booster offers protection against both the original virus that causes COVID-19 and the Omicron variant BA.4 and BA.5 and everyone eligible is strongly encouraged to get it. Pfizer BioNTech and Moderna bivalent booster doses are available at the Oneida County Health Department as well as various locations in the community. To find a COVID vaccine, visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/>.

To make an appointment at the Oneida County Health Department for either vaccine, please call 315-798-5747. For more information, visit <https://ocgov.net/health>.

#### ADMINISTRATION

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#### SPECIAL CHILDREN SERVICES

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