



ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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"PROMOTING & PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF ONEIDA COUNTY"

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News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Oneida County Health Department Raises Flu Vaccine Awareness *National Influenza Vaccination Awareness Week Observed Dec. 5-9*

As Oneida County experiences one of its most active flu seasons in recent years, the Health Department is helping to raise awareness of flu vaccines as part of National Influenza Vaccination Awareness Week.

Oneida County has already had almost 800 reported cases this season, a very high number at this point in the season compared to years' past. This, coupled with concerns of COVID-19 and RSV, makes it extremely important to protect yourself and family this winter season.

There are proactive measures we can all take to prevent getting the flu or becoming seriously ill from the flu. Stay home if you do not feel well. Wear a mask if you do not feel well and cannot stay home. Wash your hands frequently throughout the day and get vaccinated.

"It is not too late to get your flu shot," said Daniel W. Gilmore, Ph.D., MPH, Oneida County Director of Health. "Flu shots are largely available throughout Oneida County including provider offices, pharmacies and the Oneida County Health Department. It takes about two weeks to receive the full benefit of protection from the flu shot. Now is a great time to get vaccinated, especially if you plan to gather with family later in the month."

Seniors, children younger than 5 years-old and those with compromised immune systems are more susceptible to serious illness and complications with the flu, but everyone 6 months and older is recommended to get a vaccine. Each year, thousands of children in the United States are hospitalized with flu complications.

The vaccine does not cause the flu. It triggers your body's immune response by creating antibodies. Some people may experience side effects after getting a flu shot, which include redness at injection site, muscle & body aches, headache and fever. However, side effects are typically mild and only last a few days.

If you do contract flu this season, talk to your doctor early about anti-virals. If taken early enough, they can help reduce the symptoms as well as the duration of your illness.

For more information about the flu, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/>. To get a flu vaccine, visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines/> or contact the Oneida County Health Department at 315-798-5747.

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