

For Immediate Release

Contact: Susan Cerniglia, Communications Manager
Washtenaw County Health Department
ringlers@washtenaw.org
734-544-6759

It's time to get your flu shot *Sporadic cases of flu reported in Washtenaw County*

YPSILANTI, Mich., Oct. 3, 2018 – It is time for everyone six months and older to get vaccinated against flu (influenza). Sporadic cases of flu are being reported in Washtenaw County. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends getting the flu vaccine before the end of October.

“As we saw last year, flu can be very dangerous,” says Christina Zilke, RN, PHN, immunization coordinator at the Washtenaw County Health Department. “Getting your flu shot is the best thing you can do to protect yourself and our entire community.”

Vaccination can protect against severe cases of illness, hospitalization, and death due to flu, as well as reduce the spread of illness. Getting vaccinated yourself can protect people around you, including those who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people, and people with certain chronic health conditions.

Aside from vaccination, it is also important to stay home if you are sick, cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough, wash your hands often using soap and warm water, and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.

See washtenaw.org/flu for ongoing information and surveillance on this year's flu season.

Where to Get Vaccinated

Flu vaccine is widely available at area medical offices, pharmacies and community events. See vaccinefinder.org for local options. Most people with insurance can get flu shots at their doctors' offices or pharmacies for free.

The Washtenaw County Health Department offers vaccines to children and adults regardless of insurance status or income. Cost for the flu shot is \$30 for children and \$40 for adults. Call 734-544-6700 to schedule an appointment. More information is available at washtenaw.org/flushots.

Last Year's Flu Season

It is hard to predict how bad the upcoming season will be, but flu can be very serious. Last year, Washtenaw saw a record number of flu-related hospitalizations.

Over 450 Washtenaw County residents experienced flu-related hospitalizations in the 2017-2018 season – the highest number since tracking began in 2009. A majority of those hospitalized were over 65 years old, and most had underlying health conditions. Five percent of hospitalizations were in children and teens. Nine flu-related deaths were reported in adults, ages 65 to 99 years.

Washtenaw County Health Department
555 Towner Street • Ypsilanti, MI 48198
Phone: 734-544-6700 • Fax: 734-544-6705
washtenaw.org/health



Environmental Health Division
705 N Zeeb Road • Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Phone: 734-222-3800 • Fax: 734-222-3930
washtenaw.org/envhealth

Nationally, The U.S. had record-breaking levels of influenza illness, hospitalization rates and deaths in children last season. Approximately 80 percent of the 180 pediatric deaths occurred in children who had not received a flu vaccination, according to the CDC.

About Flu

Symptoms of the flu include: coughing, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, sore throat, headache, fatigue, fever and/or chills. The flu can affect anyone, but older adults, children and individuals with chronic health conditions are at greater risk for severe complications from flu. Flu is a contagious illness that can be spread person to person through droplets when an infected person sneezes, coughs or talks.

Washtenaw County Health Department

The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs.

The Washtenaw County Health Department has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board. Visit us at washtenaw.org/health or call 734-544-6700.

###