

News Release

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It's Not Too Late for That Flu Shot

Lyon County Public Health recognizes National Influenza Vaccination Week

Health Services of Lyon County joins the Iowa Department of Public Health and the CDC in recognizing December 4 through 10 as National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW). The CDC established NIVW in 2005 to highlight the importance of continuing flu vaccination through the holiday season and beyond.

Flu vaccination coverage traditionally drops off quickly after the end of November because many people believe getting vaccinated after that time is too late. "That's simply not true," said Lyon County Public Health Director Sheryl Boeve. "As long as flu viruses are circulating, people can get sick. We know flu activity generally peaks in January or February and lasts into the spring, so it is definitely not too late to get a vaccination." It takes about two weeks after vaccination for the body's immune response to provide fully protection. "With flu activity increasing and family and friends gathering for the holidays, now is a great time to get a flu vaccine to protect yourself and your loved ones," said Boeve.

The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older as the first and most important step in protecting against the flu. While the flu vaccine is the best defense against getting influenza, it's also important to take personal actions to help prevent the spread of illness. Remember the 3Cs: Cover your coughs and sneezes; Clean your hands frequently; and Contain germs by staying home when ill.

The flu is a respiratory illness caused by viruses. It spreads easily from person to person and can cause mild to severe illness. The flu comes on suddenly and symptoms may include fever, headache, tiredness, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, and body aches. Illness typically lasts two to seven days. Influenza may cause severe illness or complications in people such as the very young or very old, or those who have underlying

health conditions. Flu shots and nasal mist remain available at Health Services of Lyon County, 712-472-8200.

More information about influenza can be found at www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/Influenza.aspx.

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