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MDHHS recognizes National Influenza Vaccination Week Dec. 5-9 *Michigan residents urged to get flu vaccine before the holidays*

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is recognizing [National Influenza Vaccination Week](#) this week and reminding Michigan residents that it's not too late to get a flu vaccine.

The United States is seeing [early season elevated flu activity](#), with 35 states reporting high or very high activity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that from Oct. 1 to Nov. 12, there have been at least 4.4 million illnesses, 38,000 hospitalizations and 2,100 deaths associated with flu so far this season. The cumulative rate of influenza-associated hospitalizations was 11.3% per 100,000 individuals for the week ending Nov. 19, which is the highest hospitalization rate for this time of year since the 2010-2011 flu season. Additionally, 12 flu-associated pediatric deaths have been confirmed nationally for the 2022-2023 season so far.

"Influenza cases are on the rise in Michigan, and the situation is expected to worsen over the next several weeks. The flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and your families against the anticipated surge of influenza," said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, chief medical executive for MDHHS. "It is not too late to get vaccinated this season -- please get vaccinated today to prevent yourself from getting the potentially severe consequences of influenza this holiday season and to help prevent further burden on our health care system."

[Flu activity](#) is steadily increasing in Michigan and positive flu cases have been reported in the central, southwestern and southeastern regions across the state.

The early surge of flu activity is occurring along with significant activity of another respiratory virus, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), throughout the country and in Michigan. While there is no current vaccine to protect from RSV, the flu and COVID-19 vaccines can help protect against respiratory illnesses and they can be given at the same visit.

CDC recommends annual influenza vaccination for all persons ages 6 months and older with rare exceptions. [According to data](#) from the Michigan Care Improvement Registry, as of Nov. 12, approximately 2.2 million people in Michigan have received their flu vaccine for the 2022-2023 flu season, which is 60.9% towards the state's goal of reaching 4 million doses of flu vaccine administered this season.

For people younger than 65 years, CDC does not recommend any flu vaccine over another during the 2022-2023 flu season. Options for this age group include inactivated flu vaccine, recombinant flu vaccine or live-attenuated flu vaccine.

Vaccination is particularly important for individuals at higher risk of developing serious flu complications, including young children, adults ages 65 years and older, people with certain chronic medical conditions and pregnant persons. Some children ages 6 months through 8 years will need two doses of flu vaccine this season to be fully protected. Individuals should speak with their health care provider to determine which vaccine is best for them.

It takes about two weeks after the vaccine is administered before the body builds up enough immunity to prevent the flu. Michiganders should get their vaccine now to protect themselves before flu activity peaks in Michigan.

The Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services (DIFS) also reminds Michiganders that flu shots are an essential health benefit under the Affordable Care Act and are covered with no out-of-pocket costs by most health plans in Michigan.

“Annual flu shots help keep you healthy and protect people around you, which is why they are covered at no cost by most health insurance plans in Michigan,” said DIFS Director Anita Fox. “Consumers with questions about their health insurance coverage should contact their insurance company and if they cannot get the information they need or have additional questions, DIFS is available to help. Contact DIFS 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at 877-999-6442 or [Michigan.gov/HealthInsurance](https://www.michigan.gov/HealthInsurance).”

Flu vaccines are widely available now at local health departments, physician offices and pharmacies around the state. Find a location near you using the [Vaccine Finder](#). Visit [Michigan.gov/flu](https://www.michigan.gov/flu) for more information or visit [IVaccinate.org](https://www.vaccinate.org) to find answers to vaccine questions.

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