

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 26, 2018

Contact: Karrey Britt
Communications Coordinator
Office: (785) 856-7362

Vaccination most effective way to prevent flu

Health Department to offer community flu vaccination clinics in October

(Lawrence, KS) – The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age or older. Getting the vaccination is the most effective way to avoid getting the flu, a contagious respiratory illness.

Depending on the severity of the influenza season, between 5 and 20 percent of the population may get influenza each year. Symptoms of influenza include fever, dry cough, extreme tiredness and muscle aches. Complications can include pneumonia, ear and sinus infections and dehydration; influenza may also worsen other chronic conditions.

According to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, influenza or pneumonia contributed to or was the direct cause of nearly 1,600 deaths among Kansas residents during the 2017-18 flu season. Those most at-risk are infants and young children, older adults and pregnant women; however, flu is unpredictable and even healthy children and adults can get flu.

Clinic Supervisor Kathy Colson said it's not only important to get vaccinated to protect yourself, but also your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors. "People can be infected with the flu virus and not be showing symptoms. During this time, those persons may still spread the virus to others."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends getting vaccinated as soon as possible, ideally by the end of October, because it takes two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body that protect against the flu virus.

The Health Department, 200 Maine St., offers flu shots on a walk-in basis during clinic hours. No appointment is necessary. The Health Department accepts private insurance, Medicare Part B, Medicaid and KanCare insurance plans.

Additionally, the Health Department has scheduled community flu vaccination clinics. Participants should bring health insurance information or cash, credit card or check. The clinics will be:

- **Wednesday, Oct. 10** — 4-7 p.m., Baldwin City Public Library, 800 Seventh St., Baldwin City.
- **Thursday, Oct. 11** — 4-6 p.m., Lecompton Community Building, 333 Elmore St. Lecompton.
- **Tuesday, Oct. 16** — 4-6:30 p.m., Eudora City Offices, 4 E. Seventh St., Eudora.



Good health habits also are an important way to prevent the flu:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home from work, school and errands when you are sick. The CDC recommends you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill.
- Practice good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

About the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department has served the Lawrence and Douglas County community for more than 120 years. Its mission is to advance policies, practices and programs that promote health for all, prevent disease and protect the environment.

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