

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Public Health – Madison & Dane County,**

#### **Don't Let the Flu get you – Get your Shot**

Madison WI – December 8, 2014- Now that the cold wintery weather has kicked in, flu is beginning to show up. In Dane County there have already been several flu-related hospitalizations, and more influenza cases are expected as the season progresses.

The flu vaccine is the best way to prevent influenza. This year's vaccine covers three strains of flu. Although the vaccine is less effective than hoped against one of these three vaccine strains, it should still help protect people from severe illness from this type of influenza. And it protects well against the other two types of influenza disease that may hit Wisconsin later in the season.

Flu usually starts with a fever or feeling feverish with chills. These symptoms often lead to a strong cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, severe muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue. It is a lot worse than a plain bad cold and can potentially keep someone out of work or school and bedridden for as much as a week or two. The flu can be life threatening for the very young and older adults as well as those with other health conditions.

Pregnant women are also at greater risk of becoming extremely ill from the flu due to pregnancy related changes in the immune system, heart, and lungs. Women who contract the flu during pregnancy are more likely to require hospitalization and may be at risk for a fatal outcome. They also have a greater chance for serious problems for their unborn baby, including premature labor and delivery.

The CDC recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older gets the vaccine. Getting yourself vaccinated also provides protection to others, especially those who are unable to be vaccinated. Flu vaccine is still widely available. If you are insured, check with your clinic or a pharmacy. If adults do not have insurance, Public Health-Madison and Dane County (PHMDC) has flu vaccine available at its clinics. Children who are uninsured or have BadgerCare or Medical Assistance also may get their flu immunization at PHMDC. Call (608) 266-4821 to make an appointment. PHMDC also provides MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) and other vaccines free to eligible children and adults.

[Click here for more information about PHMDC's immunization program.](#)

[Click here for information on what you should know about this year's flu season.](#)

[Click here for more details about the flu](#)

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An online version of this release is available at

<http://www.cityofmadison.com/news/the-flu-season-has-officially-arrived-in-wisconsin>