

Keep Hands Clean to Prevent the Flu

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has provided a few simple precautions to prevent the flu.

--To stay healthy--

- Clean hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand cleaner
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Get vaccinations for the flu and pneumonia as recommended for your age and health conditions. Vaccines for these diseases can prevent some serious respiratory illnesses.

--Stopping the spread of germs--

If an individual is sick:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue every time you cough or sneeze. Then throw the tissue in a wastebasket. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough in your sleeve, not into your hands.
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose, always clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based cleaner.
- Stay home when you are sick
- Do not share eating utensils, drinking glasses, towels or other personal items.

--Precautions taken at a clinic or hospital--

- Wear a mask to protect others
- Don't worry when other people wear masks. They are preventing the spread of disease.
- Do not visit a friend or relative who is hospitalized when you are ill.

--Flu shot recommendations--

- People over 50 years of age
- Adults and children with a chronic disease like diabetes or chronic disorders of the lung and heart.
- Anyone whose immune system is weakened because of HIV/AIDS or other diseases that affect the immune system.
- Anyone 6 months to 18 years of age or on long term aspirin treatments.
- Residents of a nursing home or long term care facility.
- Women that will be in the second or third trimester of pregnancy during the flu season.
- Physician, nurses, family members, child-care workers or anyone coming in close contact with people at risk of serious influenza.
- Parents of otherwise healthy children, ages 6 to 23 months, should discuss getting a flu shot for those children with their health care provider.
- And, persons who do not wish to get the flu.

Answers to questions about the flu or where to get a flu shot can be obtained by visiting www.immunizecolorado.com or calling 1-888-692-0269.

NWFEMS will also have vaccine available after November 5, 2008. Please contact 275-3450 to make arrangements.