



# NEWS RELEASE

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## PROTECT YOURSELF, PROTECT OTHERS – GET THE FLU SHOT

NORTH BAY, ON – The Health Unit is encouraging the public to get vaccinated. The flu vaccine is now available to everyone 6 months of age or older who lives, works or attends school in Ontario. Influenza (“flu”) can make a healthy adult sick for weeks, but in vulnerable populations like older adults and children, it can lead to more serious complications. Getting your flu shot is your best defence against the flu, and protects your loved ones, too.

“Many people wrongly believe that the flu shot makes you sick with the flu, and that’s not true,” says Andrea McLellan, Manager of Vaccine Preventable Disease. “What is true, is that the flu shot lessens your chances of getting the flu and related complications which in turn decreases the number of doctor visits, hospital admissions and deaths. Protect yourself and others from influenza – get the flu shot.”

Some people are more vulnerable to complications from the flu like babies, children under five years of age, people over 65 years of age, pregnant people and people with underlying health conditions. The flu is contagious, and you can catch it from someone who hasn’t yet shown symptoms.

The vaccine is different each year because the virus changes frequently – so you need to get it every fall. The flu shot is free and it’s available at the Health Unit, at flu shot clinics held throughout the district, from participating health care providers and pharmacies.

For more information about the flu shot, flu shot clinics, or to book your flu shot appointment, contact the Health Unit at 705-474-1400 ext. 2349 or visit [www.myhealthunit.ca/FluShot](http://www.myhealthunit.ca/FluShot)

## Quick Facts

- Flu (influenza) is a contagious respiratory infection caused by influenza viruses. Flu can cause mild to severe illness that can lead to hospitalization or even death.
- The flu can lead to serious complications including pneumonia. The flu can also make chronic health issues worse.
- In Canada, the flu season generally begins in late fall and winter months. It’s a good idea to get vaccinated at the start of the flu season.

- It takes two weeks for the flu vaccine to reach maximum protection, so be sure to get the vaccine as soon as it is available.
- To prevent the spread of Influenza and other diseases:
  - Wash your hands often with warm water and soap
  - Cough or sneeze into your sleeve or use a tissue
  - Stay home when you are sick

– 30 –

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