

The DPH Bulletin – Special flu edition

From the Delaware Division of Public Health

September 2020



Flu season is nearly here; get vaccinated

The Division of Public Health (DPH) asks Delawareans 6 months of age and older to get their annual flu shot. Flu vaccination reduces the chances of getting the flu and becoming sick. DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay recommends getting flu vaccinations by the end of October, since the state usually experiences its first flu case that month.

“It is even more critical for everyone to get their flu vaccine this year as flu and COVID-19 will be circulating at the same time, and those with underlying health conditions are at greater risk from developing COVID-related complications if their immune system is already weakened from also having the flu,” Dr. Rattay said.

Individuals at high risk from the flu are adults 65 years and older, children younger than 5 years old (especially infants and children younger than 2 years old), pregnant women and women up to two weeks after the end of pregnancy, American Indians and Alaska Natives, and residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. Delawareans with chronic conditions are also at risk.

For more information, visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Where to get your flu vaccine

Delawareans should first seek a flu vaccine from their primary care provider (PCP), pharmacy, or grocery store. Uninsured people and those



whose insurance does not cover the flu vaccine may be vaccinated at DPH clinics. Individuals with insurance, but who do not have a PCP, should select a PCP.

Clinics accept donations,

Medicaid, or Medicare Part B.

For the flu clinic schedule, visit flu.delaware.gov or call 1-800-282-8672, or use www.flu.gov to find flu clinics in your ZIP code.

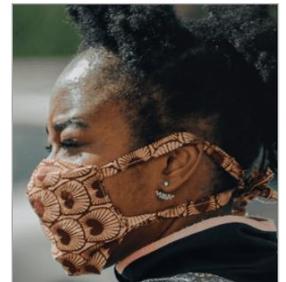
Underlying conditions elevate flu risk

Delawareans with chronic health conditions should closely manage their health to avoid unnecessary medical visits and hospitalizations during flu season. Fewer flu cases help providers recognize COVID-19. Also, DPH wants to avoid having people become ill with the flu and COVID-19 at the same time.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people who have these underlying conditions have a greater risk of having serious flu complications: asthma, blood disorders, chronic lung disease, diabetes, heart disease, neurologic conditions, obesity, and weakened immune systems. For the CDC's full list, [click here](#).

Prevent respiratory diseases

- Get a flu vaccine every year. Keep immunizations up to date to prevent respiratory diseases such as influenza, pertussis, pneumonia, and shingles.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.
- Wear masks in public that cover your face and nose.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Social distance (be at least six feet apart from those outside the household).
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or cough or sneeze into your inner elbow.
- Clean and sanitize frequently touched surfaces.
- If sick with flu-like illness, stay home from work, school, and other gatherings. Do not return until you are fever free (100 degrees Fahrenheit, or 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher) without fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours. If flu symptoms worsen, call your doctor.



FLU FACT

People with chronic conditions such as heart disease, asthma, or diabetes are at a greater risk for developing serious flu complications.

#FIGHT FLU



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health