



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Vermont Flu Season Officially Starts with First Confirmed Case

For immediate release: December 21, 2011

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BURLINGTON – The Vermont Department of Health Laboratory has confirmed the first case of influenza this season in a person from Windsor County.

“Although the first official case is from southern Vermont, flu is inevitable this time of year and we expect to see flu in every area of the state. This serves as a reminder to take every precaution to help keep flu from spreading,” said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD. “The best way to protect yourself and others is to get vaccinated.”

Flu season typically begins in December or January and may continue through April. Older adults, young children and people with underlying medical conditions are most at risk for serious illness or complications from the flu. Flu vaccination is recommended for everyone age 6 months and older.

Supplies of vaccine are plentiful this season. The Health Department has already distributed more than 59,000 doses of flu vaccine for pediatric use to doctor's offices this year through its Vaccines for Children program. In the U.S., more than 130 million doses of vaccine have been delivered. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for the body's immune system to fully kick in.

“If you haven't had the vaccine already, now's the time,” said Dr. Chen.

Flu viruses spread mainly through droplets spread through the air when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby. You can also get the flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching your own mouth, eyes or nose.

Actions that everyone can take to stay healthy and keep illness from spreading:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve every time you sneeze or cough.
- Wash your hands often and well with soap and water.
- Use a hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available.
- Keep hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home from work, school or public places when you're sick.

Flu symptoms typically include fever, headache, tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and body aches. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea are symptoms that can occur but are more common among children than adults.

For questions about the flu, visit the Health Department's website at healthvermont.gov

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