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**Illnesses on the rise in Cayuga County
Do Your Part to Keep the Community Healthy!**

The Cayuga County Health Department wants to remind the community that if you are sick, do not go to work or school. We need everyone to be responsible and protect co-workers, friends, classmates from illness and especially those individuals who are immunocompromised, by not exposing them to illness. This is very important when trying to control the spread of the flu. Stay home until you are free of fever for at least one day.

The number of local flu cases has been rising significantly in the past several weeks. From October 1, 2019 through January 15, 2020, 156 cases of flu have been reported to the Cayuga County Health Department (CCHD). These are laboratory confirmed cases. These numbers do not reflect those individuals who have gone to their doctor and had a rapid test done in the office with results given in a few minutes. It also does not reflect those individuals who have not sought treatment or care. Therefore, we know the flu is more widespread in our community than our statistics show.

Of the 156 total cases, 58 were reported in children 18 years of age and younger. The breakdown of influenza cases is; 68 cases of influenza A and 88 cases of influenza B.

Flu is a viral respiratory infection that causes fever, aches, and coughing. It spreads from one person to another by cough droplets or by direct contact with someone who has the flu. Most healthy adults can infect others 1 day before symptoms appear and 5 to 7 days after becoming sick. Young children and people with weakened immune systems may be able to infect others for an even longer time.

In addition to the flu, we are aware of the number of children diagnosed with Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), which is not required as a reportable illness to the Health Department.

Respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, infection is also a viral respiratory illness. RSV is spread through contact with droplets from the nose and throat of infected people when they cough and sneeze. Anyone can be infected, but RSV most often causes serious illness in infants and very young children. Typical symptoms resemble the common cold. However, RSV infection can also result in pneumonia, especially in the very young, the very old or those with weakened immune systems. However, mild or unnoticeable illness may occur. Symptoms may persist for a few days to a number of weeks.



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The CDC is recommending that flu vaccination should continue through January or even later. Flu vaccines cause antibodies to develop in the body about two weeks after vaccination and since flu season typically peaks in February, it is not too late to get vaccinated!

The Cayuga County Health Department is encouraging residents to:

1. Prevent flu by getting vaccinated: Anyone 6 months and older should get a flu shot. Getting the flu shot is one of the most important ways to protect against influenza. It's not too late to get your flu vaccine.
 - a. Where can you get the flu shot?
 - i. You can call the Cayuga County Health Department at 315-253-1560 to schedule an appointment.
 - ii. Your health care provider may have flu shots available.
 - iii. Local pharmacies may have flu shots available.
2. Practice precautions to stop the spread of flu infection: If you are sick, do not go to work or school. Stay home until you are free of fever for at least one day. Practice social distancing, cover your cough and sneeze, and wash your hands often with soap and water.
3. Call your healthcare provider immediately if you think you have the flu, especially if you are at high risk to develop severe complications. High risk individuals include the very young and old ages, chronic lung disease, asthma, diabetes, or if you are obese or pregnant.
4. Bring young children and babies to see a medical provider if they develop a respiratory problem.

There are antiviral medications that your doctor can prescribe to help with the flu. These drugs are not available over the counter. Influenza antiviral drugs are the only drugs approved to treat influenza infection and can make flu illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. Antiviral drugs work best when started within two days of symptoms first appearing. There is no treatment for RSV.

Anyone with questions or concerns can call the Cayuga County Health Department at 315-253-1560 or visit our website: www.cayugacounty.us/immunization
