



Nov. 22, 2006

HEALTH ADVISORY

National Influenza Vaccination Week Nov. 27-Dec. 3, 2006

To help raise awareness about the importance of influenza vaccination in November and beyond, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Influenza Vaccine Summit and other partners announce a National Influenza Vaccination Week to take place from Monday, November 27 through Sunday, December 3, 2006. CDC encourages state and local health departments, public health partners, and providers to plan influenza vaccination clinics and activities to promote influenza vaccination. Free materials are available for easy printing at the “flu gallery” (www.cdc.gov/flu/gallery), including posters and educational flyers.

The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) will be running both television and radio public service announcements throughout that week reminding people that it is never too late to get the flu shot and reinforcing the message that getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself and family from influenza. In addition, NDDoH is working on holding a news conference to convey the same message to the media. For information about influenza cases in North Dakota or to order educational materials, visit www.ndflu.com or contact the North Dakota Department of Health Division of Disease Control Control, at 701.328.2378.

Every year in the United States, on average 5 percent to 20 percent of the population becomes infected with influenza virus. More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from influenza complications and about 36,000 people die from influenza. Vaccination is the best way to prevent influenza and its severe complications. Anyone who wants to reduce their risk for getting influenza should be vaccinated during each influenza season. Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for the following groups:

- People at high risk for influenza-related complications and severe disease, including:
 - Children age 6 to 59 months
 - Pregnant women
 - People age 50 and older
 - People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions

- People who live with or care for persons at high risk, including:
 - Household members in frequent contact with people at high risk and who can transmit influenza to those persons at high risk
 - Health-care workers

Although vaccination programs focus on providing vaccination before or early in the influenza season, influenza vaccination should continue throughout the fall and winter months since influenza activity can circulate anytime from November through April. In addition, many people recommended to receive influenza vaccination have not been vaccinated by November.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

- *Health Alert conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.*
- *Health Advisory provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.*
- *Health Update provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.*
- *Health Information provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.*

This message is being sent to local public health units, clinics, hospitals, physicians, tribal health, North Dakota Nurses Association, North Dakota Long Term Care Association, North Dakota Healthcare Association, North Dakota Medical Association, North Dakota EMS Association and hospital public information officers.