



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 9, 2009
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September is Preparedness Month: Be prepared for the flu

With September being National Preparedness Month, the Kane County Health Department is reminding people to think about preparedness when it comes to the flu. With the possibility of two strains of flu, seasonal and H1N1, circulating through our area this fall, the Health Department recommends that families sit down and prepare plan for facing the risks of becoming infected with either virus, including getting a shot.

Medical providers will be receiving or have already received their stocks of seasonal flu vaccine, so now is a good time to schedule a flu shot. Vaccine for the H1N1 virus is expected to arrive in mid- to late-October. Please check the Health Department's Web site www.kanehealth.com often for updates on the situation. For more information and referrals about seasonal flu shots, please call the Health Department's Bee Wize Immunization program at (630) 264-7665 or 866-BEEWIZE (866-233-9493).

"The seasonal flu takes its toll every year, and with H1N1 lurking around the corner, that makes it doubly important to take the proper steps to prevent the spread, including getting a flu shot," said Paul Kuehnert, Executive Director.

What you can do to stay healthy:

- Stay informed. Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- Take everyday actions to stay healthy.

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- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Stay home if you get sick. CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Find healthy ways to deal with stress and anxiety.
- Find a flu buddy (i.e. someone to check in with you if you're elderly, live alone or remember to check in with neighbors and family who might become ill.
- Get Ready! Talk with your family about creating or adding flu items to your emergency kit (soup, Gatorade, water, etc.)

The Illinois Department of Health has two hotlines available to answer questions about the H1N1 virus: (866) 848-2094 for English, and (866) 241-2138 for Spanish. More flu information is available that Health Department's Web site at www.kanehealth.com, or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.flu.gov. You can also follow the Kane County Health Department on Facebook, or on Twitter at KaneCoHealth.

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