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Flu vaccination and fall fun at the Health & Community Services Department

KALAMAZOO, Mich. – The Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department invites the community to a spooktacular event combining the importance of public health with fall fun on Tuesday, Oct. 24 at its 311 E. Alcott Street location.

Flu Clinic: Scare away the influenza virus by [scheduling an appointment](#) to get vaccinated between 3-7 p.m. The first 30 appointments, available to anyone 6 months and older, will receive a free book bag from the department's Area Agency on Aging Division. Furry friends with West Michigan Therapy Dogs will join the clinic starting at 4 p.m.

Please bring a photo ID and copy of insurance to the appointment, and consider completing this [online registration form](#) in advance. While most insurance plans cover the vaccine cost, no one will be turned away for an inability to pay. A parent or guardian should accompany those under the age of 18.

Trunk-or-Treat: Once you've been vaccinated, treat yourself to something sweet in the north end of the parking lot from 4-6 p.m. where vehicles will also hand out goodies and important program information. In the event of adverse weather, the festivities will shift indoors.

"As the seasons change, so does our public health landscape, with viruses like influenza gaining momentum. However, flu clinics like this one can help residents stay ahead of those dangers," Health Officer Jim Rutherford said. "Protecting yourself and others through vaccination is a safe and effective way to reduce illness, school or work absences, hospital stays, and death."

Anyone can get the flu and experience symptoms like fever, body aches, cough, sore throat, and fatigue – including healthy children and adults. However, people vaccinated against the flu are less likely to suffer severe illness, hospitalization, or fatality. The vaccine also prevents the virus from spreading to others, protecting those at a higher risk of developing more serious illness.

In addition to getting vaccinated, people can take the following steps to prevent flu from spreading:

- Stay home and away from others when you are sick.
- Clean your hands often, with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

For more information about flu and other seasonal illnesses, please visit www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/index.html. To find vaccination locations near you, visit www.vaccines.gov/.

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