



# KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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**NEWS RELEASE FOR  
IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Health Department Reminds Kalamazoo County Residents to Get Flu Vaccine**

KALAMAZOO, MI—Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department wants to remind Kalamazoo County residents to get vaccinated against the flu to protect themselves and their loved ones from the influenza virus. Every person six months and older should get an annual flu vaccine, especially certain groups considered at the highest risk, like young children, pregnant women, adults who have chronic health conditions, or adults over the age of fifty.

Influenza is a serious respiratory illness that occurs seasonally nationwide. The flu season typically starts in October and can last as late as May. The flu shot takes approximately two weeks to provide full protection against the influenza virus. Therefore, it is recommended that residents receive their vaccine before the holiday season begins. Getting a flu vaccine this fall can reduce your risk of getting the flu and missing time at work or school.

"We understand that people may be tired of hearing about respiratory illnesses. This flu season, however, has the potential to be one of the worst we have seen in recent years," said Kalamazoo County Health Officer Jim Rutherford. "Based on data we have seen from Australia, the flu season started earlier than normal, and children aged 5 to 9 made up the largest number of cases. The influenza vaccine is a safe and effective way to reduce illness, school or work absences, hospital stays, and death due to the flu. We encourage everyone to get the flu vaccine this year to protect themselves personally, as well as to protect our community."

Anyone can get the flu, including healthy children and adults. Symptoms of influenza include fever or feeling feverish/chilled, body aches, cough, sore throat, or fatigue. It is important to get the flu vaccine, which is the most effective way to prevent the virus altogether. It is a myth that the influenza vaccine causes the flu; it does not. Furthermore, if a person becomes infected with influenza even after being vaccinated, they are less likely to become severely ill, hospitalized or die.

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**HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

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The vaccine helps to prevent you from spreading the flu to others, including those at risk of more serious illness. Additionally, these simple steps can help stop the spread of flu or other germs and help protect you from getting sick:

- Stay home when you are sick, which will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Avoid close contact with people who 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.

The Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department offers flu vaccinations Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. To make an appointment:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0b4ca5af29a2fb6-pfizer1>

You can visit [www.vaccinefinder.org](http://www.vaccinefinder.org) for more local options. Most insurance plans will cover the vaccine cost, but no one will be turned away from the health department for an inability to pay.

For questions regarding the influenza vaccine or for information about county influenza vaccination coverage, visit [www.kalcounty.com/hcs/flu vaccine/](http://www.kalcounty.com/hcs/flu vaccine/).

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Kalamazoo County Government  
Health & Community Services Department



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