

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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National Influenza Vaccination Week Starts December 8th

McCook – National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) is scheduled for December 8-14, 2013. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) will be holding clinics in Curtis on December 9th and in Cambridge on December 10th for area residents to get their flu shots. You can also receive the influenza vaccine in the McCook office. Call to schedule an appointment at 308-345-4223.

Established in 2005 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NIVW was created to highlight the importance of continuing influenza vaccinations after Thanksgiving and into January. CDC recommends that **every person 6 months and older receive an annual flu vaccine**.

Vaccination is the best protection against the flu and from flu-related complications according to the CDC. “Influenza is highly contagious and is caused by the influenza virus,” explains Melissa Propp, SWNPHD Public Health Nurse. “The virus is spread from person to person primarily through droplets, which are released when an infected person coughs or sneezes. We highly recommend regular handwashing and covering your cough, especially during the holiday season”.

“If you are experiencing flu symptoms, please stay home for at least 24 hours after you are free of fever, without taking fever reducing medication”, shares Propp. “We offer a special flu vaccine for people aged 65 years and older due to their higher risk for flu complications.” It takes approximately two weeks to receive complete immunity from influenza after getting the vaccine. Vaccination is very important for people with health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and chronic illnesses. Keeping our communities healthy will take all of us sharing these messages during National Influenza Vaccination Week.

“Do not confuse influenza with GI virus, better known as “stomach flu”. Influenza is in your lungs. GI virus attacks your stomach and/or digestive tract “states Propp. “The flu shot can protect you from getting influenza but it does not protect you from “stomach flu”. If you have questions, contact Melissa at 308-345-4223 or email: nurse@swhealth.ne.gov.

SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th (one block north of Arby's) in McCook. More information can also be found on Facebook or Twitter and our website at www.swhealth.ne.gov.

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