



Clinton County Health Department

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“Working Together for a Healthier Community”

www.clintonhealth.org



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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News Release

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CCHD Reminds Residents to Practice Good Health Habits

Clinton County, November 17, 2022. As cases of COVID-19, Influenza (flu) and RSV (respiratory syncytial infection) continue to rise, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) and The University of Vermont Health Network – Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH) remind residents to take precautions to help stop the spread of germs and stay healthy.

“COVID, flu, RSV and even the common cold are all respiratory illness we will likely continue to see spike in numbers from October to March each year,” explained Debra Tackett, Director of Health Care Services at CCHD. “They are caused by different viruses but have similar patterns of spread, symptoms, at-risk groups and prevention strategies.”

Symptoms of flu, COVID-19 and RSV typically mimic the common cold but can cause severe infection in some individuals. The three respiratory illnesses also share many of the same symptoms, including fever, cough and runny nose. “Because the symptoms are so similar, it’s difficult to diagnose these respiratory illnesses by the symptoms alone,” explained Ms. Tackett. “It is important to confirm diagnosis with a home COVID-19 test as soon as possible. This will enable you to seek prompt treatment from your provider, as well as help to stop community spread.”

“An early and active influenza season, a surge in RSV and the continued threat of COVID-19 has created what some are calling a potential ‘tridemic.’ This triple threat to our communities’ could overwhelm an already strained health care system,” stated Wouter Rietsema, MD, CVPH Vice President of Population Health and Information Services. “We are fortunate in this community to have a number of health care options available. Knowing which will meet your need can help assure that you get the appropriate care.”

All three respiratory illnesses can be spread through droplets in the air, which means the same basic prevention methods we learned during the COVID-19 pandemic can help to stop the spread of germs.

Residents should:

- Stay home when they are sick – even if they have tested negative for COVID-19.
- Wash their hands with soap and water frequently.
- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces often.
- Wear a well-fitting face covering when they must be around others.
- Be sure everyone in their family (who is eligible) gets a flu vaccine.
- Help reduce the risk of serious illness or hospitalization due to COVID-19 by getting vaccinated and boosted.
- Know where to seek medical attention and when.

Residents should contact their primary care provider:



“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”

- When it is not urgent and they feel they can wait a day.
- They have a new problem or an old problem flares up.
- They need a prescription refilled.
- For symptoms and conditions like: cough, cold and flu; ear infections and sore throat; minor injuries like sprains, bumps and bruises; rashes; urinary tract infections; chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, COPD, asthma and allergies; immunizations.

Residents should contact an urgent care center:

- When the condition doesn't appear life threatening, but they do not feel they can wait until the next day to see their primary care provider.
- For symptoms and conditions like: cold or mild flu symptoms; sore throat, vomiting; fever without a rash; non-life threatening allergic reactions; ear pain; painful urination; diarrhea; sprains and strains; small cuts that may require stitches; dehydration; mild asthma attacks; abdominal pain.

Residents should utilize the emergency room:

- When they have a serious or life-threatening condition.
- For symptoms and conditions like: chest pain; difficulty breathing; weakness/numbness on one side; slurred speech; fainting/change in mental state/confusion, serious burns, head or eye injury, broken bones, dislocated joints; fever with a rash; seizures; severe cuts that may require stitches; severe cold or flu symptoms; vaginal bleeding with pregnancy; uncontrollable bleeding; severe asthma attack; severe allergic reaction; poisoning.

“Many cases of COVID and flu can be prevented with vaccination,” urged Ms. Tackett. “Reducing the number of people who become ill will help reduce the spread of illness through our community as well as reduce the strain we see on our local healthcare system.”

About the Clinton County Health Department:

The Health Department is an accredited full service department serving the residents of Clinton County. The Health Department’s Mission is to improve and protect the health, well-being and environment of the people of Clinton County. Visit our website at www.clintonhealth.org or connect with us on Facebook (@clintonhealth), Twitter (@ClintonCountyHD), and Instagram (clintoncountyhealth).

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