

Panhandle

Public Health District

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For Immediate Release:

Don't be a turkey, get your immunizations now to make this holiday season one of joy and good health!

Getting both your flu and COVID immunizations now, and RSV for high-risk people, is the best way to ensure maximum immunity before the holidays. This gives your body the time it needs to develop a strong immune response, providing you with the highest level of protection when you need it most. Don't wait - schedule or walk in today! Learn more at <http://www.pphd.org/immunizations.html>.

"Coming together for the holidays is a cherished tradition, a time to celebrate the bonds that unite us. Let's also honor the love we share by protecting one another. Getting vaccinated ensures we create moments that are not only joyful but safe for all," said Paulette Schnell, Deputy Director of Clinical Services at Panhandle Public Health District.

Most insurance covers these important immunizations because of the promising results against severe disease but be sure to check with your insurance provider. PPHD offers free Vaccines for Children (VFC) and Vaccines for Adults to support some vaccines. Call your local vaccine provider or PPHD at 308-633-2866 before going to confirm if you or your family are eligible for one of these free vaccine programs.

The usual flu season begins to increase in October with peak activity between December and February. Getting vaccinated not only safeguards your own health but also contributes to the collective effort in preventing the spread of these viruses within communities. Let's make this holiday season one of joy and good health.

Flu, RSV, and COVID immunizations significantly reduce the risk of developing severe respiratory complications and hospitalization, ultimately protecting against avoidable illness or death. They also reduce strain on healthcare resources and the workforce.

In addition to getting vaccinated, other ways to keep you and your loved ones healthy include:

- **Avoid close contact.**
Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
When possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others.
- **Cover your mouth and nose.**
Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you don't have a tissue,

cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. Flu & COVID viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with the virus cough, sneeze, or talk.

- **Clean your hands.**

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.**

Germs can be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

- **Practice other good health habits.**

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work, or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, learn, work, and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community. Visit our website www.pphd.ne.gov.