**Flu Information for 2017-2018**

Getting an annual flu vaccine is the first and best way to protect yourself and your family from the flu. **According to the Wood County Health District, influenza cases are increasing in Wood** **County.** Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctor’s visits and missed work and school related to flu.

What’s new this flu season?



* The nasal spray flu vaccine is not recommended this year
* Flu vaccines have been updated to better match the viruses.
* Pregnant women may receive any licensed, recommended, and age-appropriate flu vaccine.
* A four strain flu vaccine is newly available this year.

Simple Steps to Prevent Illness:

* Wash your hands often with soap and water. If not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
* Try to avoid close contact with sick people
* While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting others.
* If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).
* Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you sneeze or cough. Throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs are spread this way.
* Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.

Flu Symptoms:

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to death. The flu is different from a cold.

* Fever (not everyone will have a fever), chills
* Cough, Sore throat
* Runny, stuffy nose
* Muscle/body aches
* Headaches, Fatigue
* Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, more common in children



What if you do get the Flu?

Antiviral drugs are prescription drugs that can be used to treat flu illnesses. Prompt treatment may reduce the severity of your illness. Most people will recover in a few days to less than 2 weeks, but some people may develop complications. Pneumonia, bronchitis, sinus and ear infections are examples of complications from the flu. People 65 and older, people with chronic medical conditions, pregnant woman and young children are at high risk of developing flu-related complications.

**FLU vs. COLD**

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| **Signs and Symptoms** | **Influenza** | **Cold** |
| *Symptom onset* | Abrupt | Gradual |
| *Fever* | Usual; lasts 3-4 days | Rare |
| *Aches* | Usual; often severe | Slight |
| *Chills* | Fairly common | Uncommon |
| *Fatigue / Weakness* | Usual | Sometimes |
| *Sneezing* | Sometimes | Common |
| *Stuffy Nose* | Sometimes | Common |
| *Sore Throat* | Sometimes | Common |
| *Chest discomfort, cough* | Common; can be severe | Mild to moderate; hacking cough |
| *Headache* | Common | Rare |