



Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Flu Clinics in Dickinson and Iron County

Kingsford, Michigan – August 17, 2011. The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department (DIDHD) announced plans to conduct influenza (flu) immunization clinics. Health officials state it is very important to receive the seasonal flu vaccine. Flu is a contagious disease. It is caused by the influenza virus, which can be spread by coughing, sneezing, or nasal secretions.

Infants, the elderly, pregnant women, and people with certain health conditions – such as heart, lung or kidney disease or a weakened immune system – are at higher risk for complication from the flu virus. Flu can cause high fever and pneumonia, and make existing medical conditions worse. Each year thousands of people die from seasonal flu and even more require hospitalization. The single best way to protect yourself and your loved ones against the flu is to get vaccinated each year. It is recommended that everyone 6 months of age and older receive a flu vaccine. The DIDHD also encourages new parents, health care professionals, and those who have contact with people age 65 and older to get vaccinated to help protect these high-risk individuals. The 2011-2012 flu vaccine will protect against three different flu viruses including the H1N1 virus.

In Dickinson County, a community flu clinic will be held on Saturday, September 24th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Kingsford Middle School. **For an appointment call (906) 774-1868.**

In Iron County, a community flu clinic will be held in conjunction with the Northstar Health System Health Fair on Wednesday, October 5th from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Windsor Center (formerly West Iron County Middle School) in Iron River. **Please call (906) 265-9913 to schedule an appointment.**

Other community flu clinics will be held at the Crystal Falls Senior Center and Sagola Senior Center. In addition, after-school, community clinics will be held at the Forest Park School, West Iron County School, North Dickinson School and Norway School.

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The flu immunization will be billed to Medicare part B, Michigan Medicaid and private health insurance. For persons who do not have health insurance or whose insurance does not cover immunizations, the charge is \$30 for adults and \$15 for children/adolescents 6 months to 18 years of age.

The pneumococcal immunizations will be offered too and can be billed to Medicare Part B, Michigan Medicaid, and private health insurance. If you do not have health insurance coverage for immunizations the charge is \$15 administration.

Pneumococcal disease is a serious disease that causes much sickness and death. Pneumococcal disease can lead to serious infections of the lungs (pneumonia), the blood (bacteremia), and the covering of the brain (meningitis). Anyone can get pneumococcal disease. However, some people are at greater risk from the disease. These include smokers, people 65 and older, the very young, and people with special health problems such as alcoholism, heart or lung disease, kidney failure, diabetes, HIV infection or certain types of cancer.

Usually one dose of pneumococcal vaccine is needed. However, under certain circumstances a second dose may be given. Persons who are in the high risk category due to an illness should consult with their physician prior to receiving the pneumococcal vaccine.

The Tdap (Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis) immunization will also be available and billable to private health insurance or Michigan Medicaid. If an adult does not have insurance coverage for immunizations the charge is \$15.

Pertussis (also known as whooping cough) is a contagious disease that can be passed easily from person to person. Pertussis can cause serious illness – especially in infants who are too young to be fully vaccinated. Pertussis can cause babies to cough so much that they cannot breathe. Hundreds of babies are hospitalized each year for whooping cough, and some die from it. To protect your baby, it is recommended that new moms and everyone in the family including others that will be caring for the baby be up-to-date on their whooping cough shots.

Whooping cough can also cause adults or teens to have severe coughing that leads to vomiting or broken ribs. They can be hospitalized for pneumonia and miss weeks of work or school. Even worse, they can spread whooping cough to the babies at home.

Vaccine protection for pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, and diphtheria fades with time, so adults need a booster shot. Experts recommend adults receive a tetanus and diphtheria booster (called Td) every 10 years and substitute a Tdap vaccine for one of the boosters. The dose of Tdap can be given earlier than the 10-year mark.

Additional information is available at the Health Department's web site at www.didhd.org.

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