

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Flu Shots and COVID-19 Boosters

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) encourages residents to get their flu shots and COVID-19 booster shots to protect against respiratory illnesses this winter. Cases of COVID-19 were minimal in the health district over the summer, with an average of 2 cases per week. SWNPHD saw a small bump in case numbers at the end of summer and expects another wave of widespread infections during the fall and winter.

Influenza (flu) and COVID-19 are caused by viruses that are ever evolving and changing. This means that as our immune systems fight off infection, the viruses adapt to avoid being detected. When large numbers of people are infected at the same time as happens with flu and COVID, the viruses change more quickly. This is why researchers work to provide updated shots often, to better protect against the more recent strains of flu and COVID-19 that have been circulating.

Influenza (flu) is a potentially fatal, contagious respiratory illness caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. Flu vaccines prevent and diminish the severity of flu-related illness, reducing the need for medical care and hospitalization.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Most people infected with the virus experience mild respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. However, some people become seriously ill and require medical attention. The COVID vaccines significantly reduce the risk of developing severe COVID-19 complications and hospitalization, protecting against avoidable severe illness or death.

Everyone ages 6 months and older are recommended to get the updated flu shots and Covid shots, which will be available at SWNPHD offices in McCook and Ogallala starting in October. For those who recently had a COVID shot, they can get the updated shot two months after their last dose.

According to the CDC, it is safe and acceptable to receive COVID-19 vaccine and flu vaccine during the same appointment. These are separate shots and are not combined into one shot. Check with your healthcare provider if you have questions about getting multiple vaccinations at one time.

For more information, call SWNPHD at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. Follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok or view the website at www.swhealth.ne.gov which contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health.

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