

*It's  
because  
we care!*

## EMMONS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

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# News Release

**For Immediate Release**

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**Attached Artwork:**

None

### **ECPH Encourages Flu Shots as 2020-21 Influenza Season Approaches**

**[LINTON, ND]** – Emmons County Public Health (ECPH) is encouraging everyone aged six months and older to receive an influenza vaccination ahead of the 2020-21 flu season.

“This year’s flu season is particularly troubling with the combined potential of influenza and COVID-19,” said ECPH Executive Officer Bev Voller. “CDC estimated there were between 39 million and 56 million flu illnesses nationally from October 1, 2019, to April 4, 2020. This resulted in about 410,000 to 740,000 flu hospitalizations and an estimated 24,000 to 62,000 deaths. On September 16, the US had an estimated total of 6,610,000 cases of COVID-19 that resulted in about 196,000 deaths. The possibility exists that a combination of flu and COVID-19 could become overwhelming.”

While there presently is not a vaccine for COVID-19 available, influenza vaccines have been utilized annually for decades. The influenza vaccine is credited with preventing millions of illnesses and flu-related healthcare visits each year. Flu vaccines have been associated with lower rates of some cardiac events, as well as are associated with reducing hospitalizations among individuals with diabetes and chronic lung disease. Women who are pregnant can also receive benefits from the flu vaccine, reducing the risk of flu-associated acute respiratory infection. A flu vaccine given during pregnancy can help protect the baby from flu for several months after the birth, when he or she is not old enough to be vaccinated.

Vaccinations are especially important for individuals who are at high risk of serious complication from influenza. You may be at high risk for these serious complications if you are 65 years and older or have had, or presently have, a chronic health condition (asthma, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, chronic kidney disease). More information for specific high-risk groups is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/index.htm>.

People who should not get the flu shot include:

- Children younger than 6 months of age.
- People with severe, life-threatening allergies to flu vaccine or any ingredient (gelatin, antibiotics or other ingredients) in the vaccine. While most people with an egg allergy can get a flu shot, more information is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/egg-allergies.htm>.

“A flu shot is helping to protect many things this year,” said Voller. “It is protecting yourself and your family and friends; but there is another component to it, as well. This year you are helping protect healthcare resources that may be needed as we continue the pandemic response.”

Emmons County Public Health is providing flu shots this fall. Call (701) 254-4027 to schedule an appointment to be vaccinated. Follow ECPH on Facebook for information and updates by visiting [www.facebook.com/ecph.gov](http://www.facebook.com/ecph.gov). For more info about North Dakota influenza, visit <https://www.health.nd.gov/flu> while national information is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>.

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