



Date: February 10, 2020

FOR RELEASE THE WEEK OF:
Immediate Release

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PRESS RELEASE

Everyday Preventive Actions to Fight off Germs

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), influenza activity is high in the state of Illinois, as well as in the majority of the United States. In addition to the influenza activity, there are many other respiratory and gastrointestinal viruses circulating among our communities. Now is the perfect time to review the actions that you can take to fight off all of these germs.

Viruses can be spread in many different ways – coughing, sneezing, consuming contaminated food, or touching a contaminated object and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes. Unless you plan to live in a bubble from October through March, it is impossible to avoid contact with these germs. Here are some simple suggestions to help you stay healthy:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you or your child gets sick with a flu-like illness, the CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. After using a tissue, throw it in the trash and wash your hands.
- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

While the flu vaccine can vary from year to year in how well it works, it is still the best way to help prevent the flu and its potentially serious complications. According to the CDC several studies have shown that flu vaccination can reduce the severity of illness in people who get vaccinated but still get the flu.

The Iroquois County Public Health Department has flu vaccines available for children and adults. Please call 815-432-2483 for more information or to make an appointment.