

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Secretary of Health Highlights Multimedia Campaign to Increase Awareness of Flu Vaccine as the COVID-19 Pandemic Continues

Harrisburg, PA – Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine today announced the launch of its statewide, multimedia campaign to increase awareness of the flu vaccine and encourage Pennsylvanians to get vaccinated this year.

“COVID-19 impacted a lot of things this year, including regular vaccination appointments,” Dr. Rachel Levine said. “We are entering flu season in the middle of a global pandemic, as COVID-19 is still spreading through our communities. This is why it is especially important for everyone to get their flu vaccine. The flu vaccine is a great way to not only protect yourself, but those you love who have medical conditions that could make influenza very serious for them.”

The department received \$1.5 million from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to increase awareness of the flu vaccine through a statewide multimedia campaign. The campaign, which launched this week, will target communities across the state and encourage everyone 6 months old and older to get vaccinated. Pennsylvanians will see campaign ads run on a variety of platforms through February 2021.

“Last flu season, a record setting nearly 130,000 Pennsylvanians were diagnosed with influenza, and that is just the number of people who sought medical assistance, were tested for influenza and had laboratory-confirmed results,” Dr. Levine said. “We hope that this campaign will help Pennsylvanians understand the importance of getting vaccinated and encourage them to get their flu vaccine so we can all stay protected together. I am urging all residents to skip the flu this year and get vaccinated today.”

There are some signs and symptoms of flu that are similar to COVID-19. They include:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills;
- Cough;
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing;
- Fatigue;
- Sore throat;
- Runny or stuffy nose;
- Muscle pain or body aches;
- Headache; and in some instances
- Vomiting and diarrhea.

Flu viruses can cause mild to severe illness, including common signs and symptoms listed above. Other signs and symptoms of COVID-19, different from flu, may include change in or loss of taste or smell.

Anyone older than 6 months of age should get a flu vaccine unless they have a medical condition that prevents them from getting one. This year, individuals can get the flu shot or the nasal spray as options to protect against the flu.

It is important to remember that doctor's offices, grocery stores and pharmacies have the flu vaccine right now. It is recommended that you try to make an appointment with your healthcare provider or pharmacy first.

If you are having difficulty scheduling an appointment, you can call the department at 1-877-PA-HEALTH to set up a time to visit a state health center to get a flu vaccine free of charge.

For more information on immunizations or the flu vaccine, visit the Department of Health website at www.health.pa.gov or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).