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# NEWS

SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS – COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HEALTH DEPARTMENT REPORTS FLU IN SEDGWICK COUNTY**

(Sedgwick County, Kan.) – Sedgwick County Health Department announces the season's first confirmed cases of influenza (flu) in the county. Symptoms of the flu include fever (temperatures higher than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), headache, dry cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, body aches, fatigue and weakness.

Today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported the predominant influenza virus circulating in the United States is influenza A (H3N2). Although about half of the H3N2 strains tested by CDC did not match this season's vaccine strain, some cross-protection can occur. Vaccination (flu shot) is still the best way to protect yourself and your family from becoming ill with the flu.

You can prevent the spread of flu and safeguard yourself and your family with these simple steps:

1. Get a flu vaccination.
2. Wash your hands. Use hand sanitizer if soap and running water are not available.
3. Cough and sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.
4. Stay home if you become ill.

"People who do develop flu symptoms, should contact their medical provider right away," said Sedgwick County Health Department Interim Director Adrienne Byrne-Lutz. "Prescription antiviral medications are available to shorten the duration of flu symptoms and reduce the risk of complications."

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The Sedgwick County Health Department currently provides:

- Free flu shots to uninsured adults age 19 and older
- Flu vaccinations to uninsured children age 18 and younger, and children with state-sponsored insurance plans such as Medicaid, Amerigroup, UnitedHealthcare or Sunflower. A sliding fee scale is available for children who qualify.

Residents who qualify may visit the health department's clinic at 2716 W. Central in Wichita. Clinic hours are:

Monday-Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thursday, noon to 6:30 p.m.

Friday, 8-11:30 a.m.

If you do not qualify for a free flu vaccination, please visit your primary care physician or neighborhood pharmacy to receive one. Visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) for information about resources in your area. Flu vaccinations are recommended for anyone six months or older, unless otherwise directed by a physician. It is important to get a flu vaccination every year, as the most prevalent flu strains are usually different from year to year. Flu vaccination protects the person receiving it, as well as others who are not able to receive this type of immunization.

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