



Heartland Health Region

Healthy People, Healthy Communities, and Service Excellence in an Enduring Health System



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Protecting Yourself and Everyone Around You from Influenza *Influenza Immunizations to Begin October 31*

Immunizations are the best way to protect yourself, your family, and those around you from influenza. The Heartland Health Region will begin its seasonal influenza immunization campaign with the first clinics of the season beginning October 31st.

Vaccine will once again be available to all Saskatchewan residents at no cost. This year, the public influenza vaccination program will be providing only the injectable vaccine. Furthermore, this year's injectable vaccine will have four protective components as opposed to previous years where there have been three. This gives a wider spectrum of protection. There will be no free nasal mist. Recommendations from both the Canadian and American immunization advisory committees, based on recent studies, are that the injectable vaccine is more effective.

Any person can attend any of the available public clinics to receive their immunization. Several clinics will be offered in a number of communities throughout the region starting on October 31st. Several of these clinics offer evening hours for those unable to attend a clinic during regular business hours.

Everyone is encouraged to receive their seasonal influenza vaccination.

"Influenza is more serious than the common cold and can cause significant illness and even death, especially in more vulnerable populations. Last year we also observed significant illness in the working age adult population. A number of people get seriously ill every flu season and sadly we do experience deaths in our region each year due to influenza. We are strongly urging the public to get immunized and help minimize illness and complications in our communities," commented Dr. David Torr, Medical Health Officer for the health region.

"Vaccine is safe, effective, and protective and very rarely causes any complication. I strongly encourage everyone to get their annual influenza immunization and to encourage family, friends, and other members of the community to do the same – it is free and available to all," added Torr.

High risk groups for influenza include health care workers, adults and children with chronic health conditions, child care providers, residents of nursing homes and long

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term care facilities, seniors, healthy pregnant women, and children younger than five years but older than six months of age.

Pharmacists will provide free flu vaccinations again this year as part of the province's seasonal influenza (flu) immunization program. This additional option provides increased access, choice and convenience for residents.

In addition to the public health immunization campaign, the public may also choose to receive their immunization from participating physician/nurse practitioner offices and pharmacies. Please speak with your physician, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist to inquire about their offering of influenza immunizations.

For more information regarding the dates and locations of the 2016 seasonal influenza immunization clinics in your community and participating pharmacies please check out our website <http://hrha.sk.ca/programs-services/public-health-immunizations> You can also like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter for the latest Influenza information and available clinics, @heartlandhr is our Twitter tagline. You may also speak to your family physician or call the provincial HealthLine at 8-1-1.

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