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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE September 8, 2020**

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**Hurley, WI-** Iron County Public Health is reporting **131** positive COVID Iron County residents, **111** are recovered, **6** ever hospitalized, **1386** negative test results and **1** death.

To avoid a “TWINDEMIC” the CDC is recommending getting a flu shot as soon as they are available. The Iron County Health Department has received their first shipment and have started scheduling drive-thru sites. Health Officer Katie Hampston said, “We need to protect our nurses during this busy time at the health department with influenza vaccines and the COVID-19 cases.” Weekly drive-thru sites will be scheduled with the first one being Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-3:00 PM in the Iron County Highway Garage at 607 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave N in Hurley. “The goal is to have residents vaccinated and drive-thru sites complete by the end of October.”

PIO Zona Wick states, “You don’t need to get your flu shot from us, but you need to get a flu shot. Wherever it is most convenient and cost-effective for you is where you should get it. Contact your health care provider, Walgreen’s, Walmart or your local pharmacy.”

The flu is preventable. There are several steps you can take that drastically decrease the likelihood that you will get sick from the flu, such as avoiding close contact with people who are sick, washing your hands often, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

### **Why should I get the flu vaccine?**

The flu is a serious illness that can make you very sick. It can sometimes lead to having to go to the hospital, or even to death.

The best way to protect yourself and others from the flu is to get the flu vaccine every year in the fall. The vaccine is safe for those 6 months of age and older.

### **When is the best time to get the flu vaccine?**

Get the flu vaccine before flu begins spreading in your community. CDC recommends that people get a flu vaccine by the end of October. However, getting vaccinated throughout the flu season can still be helpful, even into January or later.

Keep in mind it takes about two weeks after getting the flu vaccine for antibodies that protect against flu to develop in the body.

### **What are the different types of vaccines?**

The health department is offering Fluzone Quadrivalent which protects from four viruses that research suggests will be most common in this flu season. Inactivated strains included are A H3N2, A H1N1, B Victoria lineage and B Yamagata lineage virus.

### **Who is at higher risk of having serious complications due to the flu?**

Young children

Pregnant women

People 65 years of age and older

People with chronic health conditions, such as asthma or heart disease

It is especially important that people in these groups get vaccinated to decrease their risk of severe flu illness. Children under the age of 6 months are too young to be vaccinated but are at a high risk of serious flu illness. It is important that people who live with or care for infants, as well as anyone who is at a higher risk of flu complications, get the flu vaccine every year to prevent spreading the flu to them.

### **Stop the Spread of Germs**

There are many ways you can stop the spread of flu germs to make sure you don't get the flu:

- Avoid close contact with people that are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are touched often at home, work, or school.
- Take good care of your body.
- Get plenty of sleep.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Eat food high in nutrients, such as vegetables, fruits, and nuts.
- Stay physically active.
- Manage stress.

If you do become sick with the flu, there are steps you can take to make sure you don't spread your illness to others:

If possible, stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care or for other necessities. CDC recommends staying home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without using fever-reducing medicine.

Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

### Take Antivirals if Prescribed

Antiviral drugs may be prescribed by your doctor if you have the flu. Many people do not need antivirals to recover from the flu, but they can be used to make the illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also help to prevent serious flu complications, such as pneumonia.

Antiviral drugs are not antibiotics. Antivirals work best when they are started within two days of getting sick. Starting antivirals later than this can still be helpful, especially if you are at a high risk of developing severe flu illness or are very sick from the flu.

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