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Flu Vaccination is Vital Protection for Everyone Aged 6 Months and Older as Nation Faces “Twindemic” of Influenza and COVID-19

(November 5, 2020 - Albany, NY) Local public health leaders across the state are encouraging New Yorkers to protect themselves and their families from an anticipated “twindemic” of influenza and COVID-19 by getting their flu vaccination.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone aged 6 months and older receive an annual flu vaccination. Those with chronic health conditions are most at risk from the flu, young and old.

Last year (2019-2020 flu season), the flu sickened 38 million Americans, sent 18 million to a care provider, hospitalized 400,000 and killed more than 22,000. The CDC estimates that vaccinations would have prevented 7.5 million of those cases and as many as 6,300 fatalities.

Notably, according to the CDC, last year’s flu season matched the deadliest year on record for children, yet each year millions of American children do not receive the vaccine.

Sarah Ravenhall, Executive Director of NYSACHO, said: “While we know how important the vaccine is to older adults and medically compromised persons, many people do not realize how important it is for children to get a flu vaccine. We are encouraging families to take a multi-generation approach to immunization, which means everyone over 6 months of age gets a flu vaccine.

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“The potential combination of flu and COVID-19 presents an unparalleled threat to the health and well-being of New Yorkers. It’s more important than ever to take every step possible to protect your health and the health of your loved ones, and that includes a flu vaccine,” Ravenhall said.

Contact your healthcare provider to schedule a vaccination or take advantage of numerous vaccination programs and services that may be available in your community or visit www.vaccinefinder.org.

Local health departments play a key role in stopping vaccine-preventable disease by promoting policy, educating communities, and delivering adult and childhood immunizations. To find your local health department, visit: www.nyscho.org/directory/.

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