



Clinton County Health Department

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“Working Together for a Healthier Community”

health.clintoncountyny.gov



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Media Release

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Protect Yourself During Respiratory Illness Season

Plattsburgh, October 6, 2026. As we enter respiratory illness season, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reminding residents to practice good health habits and take precautions to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy. Respiratory illness season typically lasts through the end of March but varies season-to-season.

Respiratory illnesses are spread through the air and affect the nose, throat, and lungs, often causing cold and flu-like symptoms. These illnesses share similar symptoms, risk factors, and prevention strategies. Every year, respiratory viruses such as influenza (flu), COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) cause hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations and thousands of deaths. Other respiratory illnesses include adenovirus, rhinovirus, enterovirus, parainfluenza and parvovirus B19 (fifth disease).

“These respiratory viruses can cause symptoms in the upper respiratory tract (the vocal chords and above) and the lower respiratory tract (below the vocal chords),” explained Nichole Louis, Director of Health Care Services at CCHD. “Some viruses also affect the nose, throat and lungs, and can lead to serious lung infections, like pneumonia.”

Symptoms of respiratory viruses include:

- Fever
- Chills
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Cough
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Decrease in appetite
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- New loss of taste or smell
- Headache, muscle or body aches
- Diarrhea
- Weakness

“The good news is that we have more tools than ever to help people protect themselves, their families, and the community from severe respiratory illness,” added Ms. Louis.

These strategies include:



“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”

- **Staying up to date with immunizations.** Safe and effective vaccines exist for influenza, COVID-19, and RSV. Discuss which of these are appropriate for you with your health care provider.
- **Avoiding close contact with sick people.**
- **Staying home when you're sick.** If you or your child gets sick, stay at home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine (e.g., Tylenol or ibuprofen). If you must leave the house when you are sick, wear a well-fitting mask and distance yourself from others.
- **Covering your mouth and nose** with a tissue (or your elbow) when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue away after use.
- **Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**
- **Routinely cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces** and objects at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill (e.g., doorknobs, keyboards, phones).
- **Practicing good health habits.** Stay smoke-free, eat nutritious foods, drink plenty of fluids, stay active, manage stress and get enough sleep.

“If you develop a respiratory illness, seek health care promptly for testing and/or treatment,” urged Ms. Louis. “If you have risk factors for severe illness; treatment may help lower your risk of severe illness.”

To learn more ways to protect yourself during respiratory illness season, visit the North Country Health Effect [here](#).

About the Clinton County Health Department:

The Health Department is an accredited full service department serving the residents of Clinton County. The Health Department’s Mission is to improve and protect the health, well-being and environment of the people of Clinton County. Visit our website at health.clintoncountyny.gov or connect with us on Facebook (@clintonhealth), X (Twitter [@ClintonCountyHD]), and Instagram (clintoncountyhealth).

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