

REDUCE FLU RISK

Health Tips for healthy living.

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Flu Season: 101

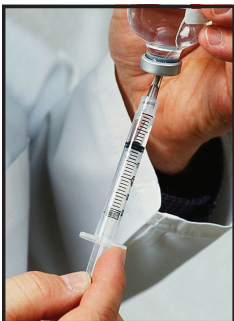
As we enjoy the fall season many of my patients have been asking about guidelines for flu shots this year. It is estimated that between 5 and 20 percent of Americans come down with the flu every season. Assuming that Rangeley will be affected at the same rate, roughly 52 to 210 Rangeley residents will become ill with the flu this year. Fortunately, there are some easy ways to lower the likelihood of catching the flu.



The flu is an infection of the respiratory tract that is caused by a flu virus. Symptoms can include fever, headache, muscle ache, fatigue, dry cough, and nausea. It can be really difficult to distinguish the common cold from the flu. One clear difference is that the flu is usually accompanied by a high fever while the common cold is not.

If you want to lower your risk of getting the flu, consider a flu shot. The groups below are considered “high risk” and it is strongly recommended that they receive a flu shot:

- Children aged 6 months up to their 19th birthday
- Pregnant women
- People 50 years of age and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions; including diabetes
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu



Others choose to obtain a flu shot as an added precaution. Consult your doctor if you want to consider a flu shot for yourself or a family member.

What makes the flu shot so effective? Every year a new vaccine is developed using three old flu viruses. These viruses are chosen because scientists believe that these specific viruses are most likely to cause the flu for the given year.

So what else can you do to try to avoid the flu? Avoid contact with those who have the flu. Wash your hands often and thoroughly. Avoid close contact with those who have the flu. Have a healthy fall and winter season!

For more information go to:

http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2005/October2005/docs/01features_02.htm#feature02

<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/topics/Flu/default.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

HealthReach Community Health Centers



12 locations to serve you:

- Bethel Family Health Center – Bethel
- Bingham Area Health Center – Bingham
- Belgrade Regional Health Center – Belgrade
- Lovejoy Health Center – Albion
- Madison Area Health Center – Madison
- Mt. Abram Regional Health Center – Kingfield
- Richmond Area Health Center – Richmond
- Rangeley Family Medicine – Rangeley
- Strong Area Health Center – Strong
- Strong Area Dental Center – Strong
- Sheepscot Valley Health Center – Coopers Mills
- Western Maine Family Health Center – Livermore Falls