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For Immediate Release

***National Influenza Vaccination Awareness Week runs December 5-11, 2010***  
*Give the gift of health this holiday season, by getting your annual flu vaccination during the National Influenza Vaccination Week.*

The single best way to prevent the flu is by getting your annual flu vaccination, especially before the usual winter peak in flu activity (late-January through March). However, as long as flu season isn't over, it's not too late to get vaccinated. By being vaccinated you can protect yourself from influenza and may also help to avoid spreading it to others.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Winnebago County Health Department recommend **everyone six months of age and older should be vaccinated against the flu.**

The influenza vaccine protects you against three strains of flu: influenza A virus, influenza B virus and the 2009 H1N1 virus. The vaccine takes usually two weeks for your body to develop antibodies. These antibodies fight off the infection if you are exposed to the flu virus. This year's vaccine is made in the same way as past flu vaccines. The vaccine is approved and licensed by the Food and Drug Administration.

Every year, flu spreads across the country from person-to-person and community-to-community. It can lead to hospitalization and sometimes death. It is particularly dangerous for certain people, but it can cause severe illness or death for anyone, regardless of their medical condition. Flu seasons are unpredictable and can be severe. Even healthy children and adults can get very sick from the flu and spread it to family and friends.

Another good way to prevent the spread of germs and to prevent influenza is to follow the "Three C's"  
Clean your hands - after using the restroom and before eating  
Cover your cough - by coughing or sneezing into your elbow or into a tissue  
Contain your germs - by staying home if you are feeling sick

Getting a flu shot is convenient and easy! "The 2010-2011 flu vaccine is available in ample supply at local health departments, hospitals, clinics, physician's offices, and pharmacies," said Sue Fuller, Public Information Officer, with the Winnebago County Health Department. You can call the Winnebago County Health Department at 815-720-4264, to schedule an appointment for a flu vaccination. For more information on the 2010-2011 flu season, visit the Winnebago County Health Department website @ [www.wchd.org](http://www.wchd.org), or connect to the department through Twitter or find us on Facebook.

***Remember... "The Flu Ends with U"***

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