



News from the Office of **ADAM J. BELLO** **MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

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MONROE COUNTY, CITY OF ROCHESTER AND OTHER PARTNERS LAUNCH COUNTY-WIDE INFLUENZA VACCINE AWARENESS COALITION

The coalition's aim is to encourage more residents to receive their flu vaccinations, prevent illness and save critical resources needed for care of COVID-19 patients.

ROCHESTER, NY —Monroe County Executive Adam Bello and a coalition of local government partners, community organizations, hospitals, health care providers and pharmacies today announced the launch of a county-wide flu vaccine awareness campaign. The coalition has set a goal of encouraging at least 80% of the community to get their annual flu shot. The start of this initiative coincides with National Influenza Vaccination Week, which runs from December 6 – December 12, 2020.

“It’s vitally important that people get their flu vaccination this year so we can help reduce the burden on health care systems responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and help save resources needed for the care of COVID-19 patients,” said Bello. “The more people who get their vaccinations, the more people are protected. By launching this campaign during National Influenza Awareness Week, we hope to encourage more residents — especially those who are high-risk and those who have loved ones at high-risk— to get this year’s vaccination because the last thing we need is a dual pandemic.”

“Getting the flu vaccine this year is more critical than ever before,” said Mayor Warren. “We need to keep not only ourselves and our families safe, but our health care providers and hospitals so they can stay strong and fight the COVID-19 pandemic. My thanks to County Executive Bello and all of our community partners for their continued leadership to protect our circles and our City.”

The initiative includes an [online map where people can locate sites providing vaccinations](#) and is a partnership between the City of Rochester, Trillium Health, Walgreens, Rite Aid, Walmart, Rochester Regional Health, University of Rochester, Jordan Health Center, CVS and Wegmans Food Markets.

“Our hospitals are working to expand capacity as we deal with this second surge of COVID-19 patients; unfortunately, we are also starting to see community members who need hospitalization because they are seriously ill with influenza,” said Michael F. Rotondo, MD, CEO, University of Rochester Medical Faculty Group. “We don’t yet have COVID-19 vaccine for our community, but we do have flu vaccination available right now. We encourage people to get vaccinated and protect themselves from a second health threat that can cause significant and even life-threatening illness.”

“Vaccines throughout history have proven to be effective in reducing disease. Getting the flu vaccine can help keep you and your family healthy while lessening the burden of disease on our health care systems that are already dealing with high capacity levels due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Robert Mayo, MD, Rochester Regional Health Chief Medical Officer.

“Flu shots are particularly important for Black and Latinos, who are more likely to be hospitalized with influenza. These populations often work jobs that expose them to many people and live in more crowded homes or with extended family. These same living conditions are also tied to the higher rates of hospitalization and death for COVID-19 that we are seeing in communities of color,” said Wade S. Norwood, CEO of Common Ground Health. “In midst of this terrible pandemic, flu shots are one thing we should be doing and are proven to prevent 82% of hospitalizations from influenza.”

“Anyone can get the flu, and it can be serious. This year, due to COVID-19, it's more important than ever to get the flu vaccine to help keep you and the people you love as healthy as possible. At Trillium Health, we serve everyone regardless of ability to pay, and we'll work with you to keep costs as low as possible. Please call us at 585.545.7200 to schedule an appointment or visit [//trilliumhealth.org/flu](https://trilliumhealth.org/flu) for more information,” said Andrea DeMeo, President and CEO of Trillium Health.

“Flu vaccines have been proven safe and effective for many years. People who get both the flu and COVID-19 suffer more than people who just get COVID. As COVID keeps getting worse all of us should do everything we can to protect ourselves and our families. In addition to wearing masks, washing hands and socially distancing we need to get the flu vaccine. Now more than ever it is important that each of us get the flu vaccine.” Janice Harbin, President and CEO

Generally, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov) recommends that all people age 6 months and older get a seasonal flu vaccine. Individuals with chronic health conditions including heart disease, diabetes and asthma may be at greater risk for serious flu complications if they become sick.

The web portal can be accessed via <https://www.monroecounty.gov/flushot>

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