

St. Mary's Church

Stewardship of the Body

By Virginia Esslinger, RN



“I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made” (Ps. 139)

## Flu Precautions

The H1N1 influenza is already present in our community and the seasonal flu is approaching. This means that this year all of us are at increased risk of becoming sick from the flu. Some of us are especially vulnerable to not only the flu, but also the serious complications that can result from a case of the flu.

Everyone is urged to be aware of the precautions that are being recommended and publicized far and wide.

### 1. **Get vaccinated.**

The seasonal flu vaccine is available now and is being offered at all of the clinics in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks as well as at the Senior Center and the Public Health Department. Vaccine without the preservative, thimerosal, is available upon request. (See schedules on back)

The H1N1 vaccine will be available in October. It will be offered first to pregnant women, household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age, healthcare and emergency medical services personnel, all people from 6 months to 24 years of age, and persons aged 25 through 64 who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from the flu.

2. If flu symptoms appear, **STAY HOME** from work, school, church and all other activities until at least 24 hours or longer after the fever subsides without the use of fever-reducing medicines.
3. Parents should check children daily for flu symptoms. The children are learning how to take precautions in school. Reinforce this information at home. Children and young people seem to be especially vulnerable to the H1N1 flu.
4. Cough or sneeze into a tissue which is then discarded, or into the sleeve; not the hands.
5. Keep hands away from the face, nose and eyes as that is the primary way that the virus invades the body.
6. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or use hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizers are being made available in many locations these days. Also carry some with you.

**For seasonal flu, the following should get the flu shot (1 shot):**

- Children aged 6 months to 18 years
- Any adult, but especially those over 50
- Anyone who has chronic pulmonary, heart, kidney, liver, neurological or neuromuscular, hematologic or metabolic (diabetes) disorders.
- Persons who have immunosuppression, caused by drugs, such as steroids or diseases such as HIV
- Residents of nursing homes or other long-term-care facilities
- Household contacts & caregivers of children and infants
- Household contacts & caregivers of persons with medical conditions
- All healthcare personnel

**Seasonal Flu Vaccine Clinics in the Grand Forks Area**

**Altru Health System:**

- Family Medicine Center: Walk in Flu Shot Clinic: September 21,22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, Oct. 1, 2. from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for people 9 years of age and older. Register at registration desk.
- Family Medicine Residency: Walk in Flu Shot Clinic: September 8, 17<sup>th</sup>, & 22<sup>nd</sup>. 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Or call 777-6800 for an appointment.
- Main Clinic – Pediatrics: Walk in Flu Shot Clinic for pediatric patients and their immediate family: dates to be announced. Other times, please call ahead but no appointment is required. Register at the lobby registration desk.

**Aurora Medical Center:**

- Walk in Flu Shot Clinics every Wednesday from September 9 through October 14 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. No appointment needed.

**Meritcare Clinic – East Grand Forks:**

- Flu shots available September 15, 22, 25, & 29<sup>th</sup> from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Appointments are preferred.

**Grand Forks Public Health:**

- Every Friday starting September 25<sup>th</sup>-October 20<sup>th</sup>.  
Bring your insurance cards with you so providers can directly bill the insurance company for the cost of the vaccine.