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There's still time to get your influenza vaccine

IH WIDE – Public health officials with Interior Health (IH) remind everyone there is still time to get your influenza vaccine (flu shot) and those six months and older are eligible.

It's easier than ever to get immunity for your community. Influenza vaccinations are free for everyone in B.C. six months of age or older, to best protect themselves, their loved ones, their communities and the health-care system this fall and winter.

"With a surge of respiratory illness in fall and winter, we encourage everyone to get an influenza vaccine for protection, especially while more people are socializing or traveling," says Dr. Fatemeh Sabet, an Interior Health medical health officer.

Families can book an appointment through the [Get Vaccinated system](#). Families with a child under 12 only need to book one appointment in a 6 month to 11 year clinic, and the whole family can get their COVID and influenza vaccines at the same time. Immunization appointments for people 12 and older are available at select community pharmacies and IH clinics, and are booked through the Get Vaccinated system. It's safe to get your COVID-19 booster at the same time as getting your influenza vaccination.

Although booking through the Get Vaccinated system is the most efficient way to access an influenza vaccine, limited walk-ins at some pharmacies continue to be available. Alternatively, you can phone the provincial call centre (toll-free) at 1-833-838-2323. If no appointments are available when you book, try again later or expand your search area; new appointments are added daily.

Getting immunized helps protect you and those around you by reducing the spread of influenza. Influenza can cause serious illness requiring hospitalization, which places additional demand on the health-care system that is still also seeing impacts from COVID-19.

Influenza vaccines are safe and effective. They have undergone rigorous review before getting approved by Health Canada.

In addition to getting vaccinated against influenza, frequent handwashing, respecting personal space, cough etiquette and staying home when sick continue to be important methods to limit the spread of germs.

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We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.