



510 W. Water St., Suite 130, Troy, OH 45373
Phone: 937-440-8105
Web: www.miamicountyhealth.net
Email: mchd@miamicountyhealth.net
Twitter: www.twitter.com/miamicountyhd
Facebook: www.facebook.com/miamicountyhealth
YouTube: www.youtube.com/miamicountyhealth

Public Information Release

Jim Luken | jluken@miamicountyhealth.net | 937-440-5418
Chris Cook | ccook@miamicountyhealth.net | 937-440-5455

COUNTY ENCOURAGES PREVENTION

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Assistant Health Commissioner Chris Cook will be getting his flu shot this year – but something else is on his mind this flu season besides the vaccine. “Prevention – plain, simple, tried, and true,” Cook said. For Cook, encouraging people to prevent the spread of the flu is every bit as important as the vaccine. “I truly believe that we can help control this flu season with some simple prevention,” Cook said. Besides getting the flu vaccine from one of their clinics, the Health District recommends four prevention activities:

1. Stay home if you are sick (make sure your fever is gone before going back out).
2. Cover your mouth and nose with your arm when you cough or sneeze.
3. Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer often.
4. Avoid sick people whenever possible.

One of the toughest prevention activities to sell is staying home from work, school, or activities if you are sick. “This is a hard one, since most of us have been raised to ‘tough it out’ if we are sick,” Cook said. “But I can’t stress enough how important it is to stay home if you are sick. Your actions during flu season affect everyone else around you.”

Symptoms of the flu include feeling feverish, headache, sore throat, body aches, tiredness, runny nose, and cough. If you have a mild case of the flu, most of the time you are better off to treat yourself at home. Contact your doctor if you have any of these symptoms: trouble breathing, sudden dizziness, confusion, not drinking enough fluids, bluish or gray skin color, severe vomiting, or pain/pressure in the chest. You should also see a doctor if symptoms improve but then return with fever and cough.

“How bad will this flu season be?” asks Cook. “I’m not sure, but I can tell you that it depends on the choices people make. If people are responsible and get vaccinated, cover their coughs and sneezes, if they wash their hands, and if they stay home when they’re sick, it will make a huge difference.”

For more information about the flu, visit the Health District’s website at www.miamicountyhealth.net or call 440-8105. The Health District can also be found on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.