



# BERRIEN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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**For Immediate Release**

## **Berrien County Health Department Extends Walk-in Flu and COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics Through December**

**Benton Harbor, Michigan, Nov. 28, 2023** - In response to community demand, the Berrien County Health Department is offering its walk-in flu and COVID-19 vaccine clinics through December.

Flu and COVID-19 shots will be available at BCHD's Niles office, 1205 Front St., from 9 a.m. to noon every Monday and at its Benton Harbor office, 2149 E. Napier Ave., from 9 a.m. to noon every Wednesday through Dec. 20. No appointments are necessary. The clinics previously were scheduled to end Nov. 29.

"We are pleased so many members of our community are getting vaccinated against the flu and COVID-19 during respiratory viral season," Health Officer Guy Miller said. "The Health Department is pleased to extend these walk-in clinics through December to help individuals protect themselves and their loved ones against illness."

In addition to vaccines, BCHD recommends following everyday preventive measures to stop the spread of germs, including:

- Avoid close contact with other people who are sick and stay home when you are sick.
- Follow the U.S. Centers for Disease Control guidance regarding isolation and masking if you test positive for COVID-19.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Practice other good health habits, including getting plenty of sleep, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, drinking plenty of fluids and eating nutritious foods.

In terms of vaccines, BCHD recommends:

- **Flu:** Everyone 6 months and older should get this season's flu vaccine, which will protect against severe disease and hospitalization even though you might still get **influenza if exposed**. It's especially important to get this vaccine if you have an

underlying medical condition such as obesity, asthma, heart disease, diabetes, emphysema or a suppressed immune system.

- **COVID-19:** Everyone 5 years and older should get the updated FDA-approved COVID-19 booster, **now the monovalent mRNA from Moderna or Pfizer.** For infants and children 6 months to 5 years, for whom it is still being given under Emergency Use Authorization from the FDA, the vaccine decreases the risk of **hospitalization and ICU stay, even for those who have no medical risk factors.** It also reduces the risk of long COVID in children **and adults.** For **older adults, the highest risk group,** a COVID-19 vaccine reduces the risk of hospitalization and intensive care stay.

If you are unable to attend one of the walk-in flu clinics, BCHD is scheduling appointments for [flu shots](#). To schedule a flu shot appointment, call BCHD at 269.927.5616. You can schedule your COVID-19 vaccine at [multiple locations](#) or through your primary care provider.

For more information on seasonal respiratory viruses, visit the [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](#).

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