



Manitowoc County Health Department

1028 S. 9th Street, Manitowoc, WI 54220

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For Immediate Release

Date: October 20, 2026

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Simple Steps to Stay Healthy This Fall and Winter

Keep your plans on track all season long

MANITOWOC, Wis. — As cooler weather brings more time indoors, colds, flu, COVID-19, RSV, and other illnesses start making the rounds. The Manitowoc County Health Department is reminding residents that a few everyday habits go a long way toward keeping families healthy through the fall and winter months.

“Nobody wants to miss work or spend the holidays sick because a bug went through the whole house,” said Korina Aghmar, Health Officer for the Manitowoc County Health Department. “A few small habits can help keep that from happening.”

Everyday steps to stay healthy

- **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially before eating and after coughing, sneezing, or being out in public.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes** with a tissue or your elbow.
- **Stay home when you're sick** so you can rest, recover, and avoid passing illness to others. CDC recommends waiting to return to normal activities until your symptoms get better overall and you've gone at least 24 hours without a fever (100.4°F or higher) and without using fever-reducing medicine. If you're sick and must be out in public, consider wearing a mask, and keep washing your hands and covering coughs.
- **Take care of the basics:** get enough sleep, eat well, stay active, and drink plenty of fluids.
- **Know your vaccine options.** Flu, COVID-19, and RSV vaccines are available and can lower the chance of serious illness, especially for people at higher risk. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) recommends a yearly flu and COVID-19 vaccine for everyone 6 months and older. Your doctor, pharmacist, or Health Department nurses can answer questions and help you decide which vaccines are right for you.

“Vaccines are one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from serious illness, especially if you're older or managing a health condition,” Aghmar said.

Kids, school, and childcare

Schools and childcare providers each have their own guidelines for when children should stay home and when they can return. Parents and guardians are encouraged to follow that guidance and to contact the school, childcare provider, or their child's doctor with any questions.

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Know when to get care

Most colds and respiratory illnesses can be managed at home with rest and fluids. Because these illnesses are usually caused by viruses, antibiotics won't help. Contact a health care provider if symptoms are severe or getting worse, and seek care right away for trouble breathing, chest pain or pressure, confusion, signs of dehydration, or symptoms that improve and then return worse.

For more information or resources

- **Respiratory illness survival kits:** Free kits with a thermometer and a mask are available at the Health Department, 1028 S. 9th St., Manitowoc, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., while supplies last.
- **Free or low-cost vaccines:** Children and adults who qualify may get vaccines at little or no cost. Visit manitowoccountywi.gov/departments/health-department/immunizations or call 920-683-4155.
- **Current respiratory illness activity in Wisconsin:** dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/respiratory-data.htm

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