


Flu and COVID - it's not too late to protect those you care for

 Influenza (the flu) and COVID are illnesses that are in our communities all year round. However, these infections become much more common from April to September, spreading easily and causing severe illness for those at increased risk.

How COVID and flu viruses spread

COVID & flu viruses spread mainly by tiny droplets made when people with these conditions cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. Less often, a person might get infected by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes.


These highly contagious conditions can be prevented by getting vaccinated

The good news is both flu and COVID vaccines can be given at the same time.



Did you know?

You may be able to spread Flu or COVID to someone else before you even know you are sick.

 Help your residents stay well this winter, encourage them to get their flu vaccine and be up to date with their COVID vaccination.

WPHU also strongly encourage staff, volunteers and visitors to be up to date with their COVID and flu vaccines. Staff should not attend work if they have any new respiratory symptoms.

Flu vaccines are available through GPs and pharmacists - find one using Health Direct Service Finder, <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services>

More information on influenza can be found on - Better Health Channel, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/flu-influenza>

Environmental Health update: Rodents

Rodents, such as mice and rats can affect our health and wreak havoc on homes and businesses. Due to their constantly growing incisors, they have a great need to chew on everything they come across.

Known carriers of disease, they spread bacteria and germs through their urine and droppings. Rodents will damage anything they come across, including your home's insulation, electrical cables, floor joints and walls.

The following tips may help you reduce rodent activity this winter:

- Keep external doors closed. Seal entry points such as holes and cracks, mice can squeeze through the tiniest of holes so be particularly vigilant sealing areas where pipes enter the home (in cupboards under sinks is a good place to check).
- Remove food sources for rodents by keeping rubbish areas tidy and keep food sealed and stored in lidded containers.
- Wipe up food spills as soon as they occur to prevent attracting rodents, as well as from ants and cockroaches.
- Keep your yard/garden tidy by removing long grass, overgrown shrubs and disused equipment, as pests may take shelter within.
- Remove potential water sources by investigating areas of condensation and repairing faulty equipment such as leaking taps.
- Undisturbed storage areas such as an attic, shed or basement - keep these areas well-lit and inspect regularly for signs of pest activity such as gnaw/bite marks, fur/feathers, spilled food and droppings.
- Encourage staff to report pest sightings or activity immediately.
- Seek expert advice from a registered pest controller as necessary.

Colder weather means that pests such as rodents (rats and mice) move indoors, seeking shelter, warmth, food, and water.

Western Public Health Unit is happy to assist with public health advice as needed and can be contacted at the below

