



## St. Lawrence County Public Health Department

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### Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### St. Lawrence County Public Health Advises Residents as Respiratory Illnesses Increase

**Canton, NY** — Respiratory illnesses, including Influenza, RSV, and COVID-19 have been increasing in our community. In the past few weeks, the North Country hospitals have seen a significant rise in Emergency Room visits and hospital admissions due to respiratory infections.

The winter holidays are an important time for families and communities to gather. The St. Lawrence County Public Health Department (SLCPHD) and Board of Health urge residents to follow sensible precautions to limit the spread of respiratory illness, with a focus on protecting those individuals who are more likely to develop severe disease. There are many measures available to increase your chance of having a healthy holiday such as:

- Staying up to date on vaccines like flu, RSV, and COVID-19
  - SLCPHD is offering the seasonal Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. This vaccine reduces the risk of severe illness and hospitalization. Please call to make an appointment.
  - SLCPHD has a limited supply of flu vaccines. We do not have a high-dose flu vaccine available for those over 65. Please call to make an appointment.
  - St. Lawrence County pharmacies are also offering flu, RSV, and COVID-19 vaccine appointments.
- Talking with your provider or child's pediatrician about the RSV vaccine if you are 32-36 weeks pregnant, the parent/guardian of a baby, and/or 60 years old or older.
- Regularly wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cleaning and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and objects.
- Considering wearing a mask in public spaces when not feeling well.
- Consider wearing a mask around someone who is at risk of getting very sick.
- Letting fresh air indoors, especially when gathering with others, and consider social distancing.
- If exposed to someone with COVID-19, wear a mask when around others for 10 days, test and watch for symptoms.

#### When Not Feeling Well

- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or elbow and teach children to do the same.
- Stay home when sick, and keep children home from school/daycare when sick.
- If you have symptoms of COVID-19, get tested and isolate until you have results.
  - Even if you test negative for COVID-19 if you do not feel well stay home while sick.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
ESTABLISHED 1986

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- A limited number of at-home COVID-19 tests are available free of charge in the Public Health Clinic at 80 State Highway 310 Canton, NY.
- Free tests are also available through the federal government and insurance companies.
  - [Get Four Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests This Fall | COVID.gov](#)
  - [How to get your At-Home Over-The-Counter COVID-19 Test for Free | CMS](#)
- Tests are available through healthcare providers and pharmacies.
- NOTE: Many expiration dates on at-home tests have been extended. A list of extended expiration dates can be found on the FDA website: [At-Home OTC COVID-19 Diagnostic Tests | FDA](#)
- For those who become ill with significant symptoms and are at risk for complications, please contact your doctor - treatment is available for both Influenza (Tamiflu) and COVID-19 (Paxlovid). Both medicines are most effective when taken within the first few days of illness, so don't delay seeking care.

### If You Test Positive for COVID-19:

- Stay home and isolate for at least 5 days, wear a mask day 6 through day 10.
- If you have symptoms after 5 days isolate until you are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine and symptoms are improving.
- If you must be around others, wear a high-quality mask for 10 days.
- Contact a healthcare provider to discuss treatment options.
- Residents can report a positive home test to SLCPHD and print an affirmation of isolation on the SLCPHD website. The affirmation can be used to notify employers of illness and coordinate a return to work after isolation. [Affirmation of Isolation](#)

For more information:

New York State Department of Health:

[COVID-19 | Department of Health \(ny.gov\)](#)

[NYS Health Connector - Flu Tracker Weekly - NYSAPD](#)

[Respiratory Syncytial Virus \(RSV\) Infection \(ny.gov\)](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

[Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) | CDC](#)

[Influenza \(Flu\) | CDC](#)

[RSV \(Respiratory Syncytial Virus\) | CDC](#)

St. Lawrence County Public Health:

[COVID-19 | St. Lawrence County \(stlawco.gov\)](#)

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