



## NEWS RELEASE

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## Stay Healthy for the Holidays

*Vaccination is Your Best Protection Against Serious Illness*

**ATLANTA** – The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) is reminding Georgians that holiday gatherings, crowded travel, and more time indoors make it easier for germs to spread, especially those that cause flu, COVID, and RSV. Vaccination is the most important step you can take to protect yourself and your loved ones.

Everyone ages 6 months and older should get a flu vaccination and updated COVID-19 vaccination. The vaccines can be given at the same time, so it's just one trip to your healthcare provider or pharmacy. Side effects are typically mild and only last a day or two. If you do get sick, vaccination will help prevent serious illness or hospitalization.

Some adults may need an RSV vaccination, but it's important to talk to your healthcare provider first to see if RSV vaccination is right for you. Pregnant women can protect their unborn babies by getting an RSV vaccination; and the CDC recommends an RSV preventive antibody for infants and some older babies at higher risk for severe RSV disease.

If you have signs or symptoms of a respiratory virus, like a cough, runny nose, or fever, tests can help figure out which illness you have. COVID tests are widely available over the counter, [at health departments and kiosks statewide](#). Kiosks also provide flu tests. Your healthcare provider may also test you for flu, COVID and/or RSV. You can also discuss the best treatments available with your healthcare provider.

Basic prevention measures should be followed to help prevent further spread of respiratory illness and to help mitigate outbreaks of infection - covering your coughs, sneezing into your elbow, throwing away used tissues, washing your hands frequently with soap and water, and staying home if you're sick so you don't put others at risk.

The holiday season can be stressful with responsibilities and obligations. Remember good eating, sleeping, and exercise can help keep you healthy, too.

For more information about flu, COVID, or RSV, log on to [dph.ga.gov](http://dph.ga.gov).