

PORTAGE COUNTY LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

JOINT COMMAND TEAM

Portage County Health Department
Ravenna City Health Department
Kent City Health Department

PCHD 330-296-9919
RCHD 330-296-4478
KCHD 330-678-8109

For Immediate Release

Friday October 30, 2009

Media Contact: Sarah Hallsky
Public Information Officer
330-296-9919

Keep at-risk populations healthy this holiday season

“The upcoming holiday celebrations are always a time for gathering with family and friends, sharing food, hugs and kisses. We don’t want people to miss out on that, we just want them to use common sense. This is especially important for families with young infants or chronically ill relatives” said Dr. Angela DeJulius, Portage County Medical Director. Taking simple precautions, such as staying home when you are sick and covering coughs and sneezes can help to keep others healthy. Everyday actions become especially important when flu vaccine is limited.

As Ohio continues to report widespread illness from flu, families are advised to remember that basic hygiene works best: washing hands often, using hand sanitizer, and not sharing food or drinks. People who are sick, coughing, or running a fever know they should stay home from school and work, but they should also avoid social gatherings out of consideration for their friends and family. Some parents might wish to reconsider holding parties. “It might be time to ask yourself whether this is a good time for a party or a sleepover.”

With Halloween approaching, health officials are concerned about the potential for the disease to spread more quickly. “We would like people to stop and think about what they could do to limit the spread of illness among their family and friends.” Food should be served with utensils, avoiding bowls of candy or snacks that people reach into with their bare hands. Children and teens should be reminded not to share drinks and food. Commonly shared items such as keyboards, remote controls, or video game controllers should be wiped off with household cleansers. Halloween items most likely shared by children, such as masks, should also be cleaned in between use.

###

