

## 1. About Tochigi's Autumn Festival

Tochigi City's largest event, "Tochigi Autumn Festival" will be held from November 11 to 13, mainly on Kura-no-Machi Main Street.

The "Tochigi Autumn Festival" began in 1874 during the Meiji Era in Japan. Today, once every two years in November, gorgeous and beautiful traditional doll floats made in the Edo and Meiji periods are paraded through the city. These floats are the symbol of Tochigi. This year, the festival will be held for the first time in four years, as it has been postponed since 2018 due to the pandemic.

On November 11th, elementary school students in the city will pull the floats around the city. On the 12th and 13th, the main festival will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Floats owned by each part of the city will be paraded through the warehouse district to the accompaniment of traditional Japanese flute and drum music

At night, the floats will be beautifully illuminated with lanterns.

This festival is a great opportunity to experience the history and culture of Tochigi City.

When you go to see the festival, please wear a mask and be careful not to shout. Also, try to stay away from crowded places and keep your distance from other people.

## 2. About the J-Alert nationwide instant warning system

If there is a possibility that a ballistic missile may fall on Japan, the government will use the "J-Alert" system, which provides emergency information instantly, with a special siren sound and instructions over the disaster prevention administrative radio.

Ballistic missiles can reach Japan in as little as 10 minutes after launch. When you hear the siren, please remain calm and take immediate evacuation actions.

If you are outside, evacuate to a nearby building or underground to avoid damage from the blast and debris when the missile strikes. If there is no building nearby, hide behind something or lie down on the ground to protect your head. If indoors, move away from windows or into a windowless room. If you are driving a car, immediately pull over to a safe place, get out of the car, and get down on the ground to protect your head.

On November 16 at 11:00 a.m., there will be a nationwide J-Alert communication drill. In Tochigi City, there will be broadcasts via outdoor speakers located at 185 locations in the city.

Please be aware that "J-Alert" is a special warning and be prepared to evacuate in case of emergency.

### 3. Influenza Prevention

The number of cases of COVID has recently continued to decrease, and restrictions on entry into Japan from abroad have been eased.

However, experts suggest that there is a high possibility of a simultaneous outbreak of COVID and influenza in the coming winter.

This is because the past two years have seen a sharp decline in the number of influenza cases in Japan since the emergence of COVID, which is thought to have possibly reduced the proportion of people who are immune to influenza.

Influenza epidemics are usually observed from the end of December to around March. Symptoms include sudden high fever, headache, joint pain, and muscle aches.

Although vaccination against influenza cannot completely prevent the onset of the disease itself, it can prevent the symptoms from becoming more severe.

It is said that it takes about two weeks after receiving the vaccination for the body to develop resistance to influenza. Therefore, it is advisable to receive the vaccination before the influenza epidemic occurs.

There are no restrictions on the interval between the COVID and the influenza vaccines, so you can be vaccinated for both at the same time.

Since the main route of influenza infection is through droplet transmission, the risk of influenza infection can be reduced by taking the same basic infection control measures as COVID such as wearing a mask, washing hands, avoiding crowds, and proper ventilation.

In addition, if you are not feeling well, please refrain from going out. If you have a fever or other symptoms, call your medical institution for advice.