

## 1. About Tochigi Nutritional Education Promotion Month

Have you ever heard of the term "shokuiku"?

For us, food is life. It is important for both adults and children.

We can lead healthy and enriched lives, both mentally and physically, by having the right knowledge about food and eating a nutritionally balanced diet throughout our lives.

October is "Tochigi Nutritional Education Promotion Month". Let's take this opportunity to learn how proper nutrition leads to good health.

The most important part of nutrition education is to establish good eating habits for children such as eating a proper breakfast, eating meals together as a family and having a sense of appreciation for food. It is also said that it is important for children to help prepare and clean up after meals. Early childhood is a crucial time for children to learn the basics of eating habits which is the foundation of their lifelong healthy development.

The Tochigi City Health Promotion Division provides educational counseling for parents and their children. In addition to parenting consultations by public health nurses, consultations on baby and infant food by nutritionists are available.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any problems with your baby's diet. Consultations are held on the first Tuesday of each month from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. No appointment is necessary and reservations are not required. The location is the Tochigi Health and Welfare Center in Imaizumi-machi.

## 2. Subsidies for Influenza Vaccines for Children

Influenza usually peaks in winter from January to March, but this year the number of infected people nationwide is increasing rapidly, earlier than usual.

To prevent influenza, in addition to vaccination, basic preventive measures such as "washing hands," "gargling," and wearing a mask should be taken.

In Tochigi City, subsidies for pediatric influenza vaccinations will begin in October. It is available for children residing in the city aged 6 months or older until the 2nd grade of elementary school.

The amount of the subsidy is 2,500 yen. The subsidy will cover the cost of two vaccinations from October 1 to February 29 of next year.

Those who wish to receive the pediatric influenza vaccine should make an appointment in advance at a participating medical institution in the city.

## 3. COVID Vaccinations for Fall of 2023

Vaccinations for the fall of 2023 have begun in Tochigi City. One vaccination per person will be available from September 20 to March 31 next year.

There is no charge for the vaccination. The type of vaccine is the Omicron strain of Pfizer or Moderna.

It is up to you to decide whether you want to be vaccinated or not.

When you receive your vaccination card, please make an appointment for vaccination at a medical institution in the city. Those who wish to receive the group vaccination can make reservations at the city's call center or online reservation site from September 26.

On the day of vaccination, you will be required to fill out a preliminary medical questionnaire before receiving the vaccine. No other vaccinations, except for the influenza vaccine, are allowed for two weeks before and after the COVID vaccination.

The number of cases of COVID is increasing. Please take precautions by wearing a mask and receiving the vaccine as appropriate to your situation.

If you are infected, COVID has been updated to a category 5 infectious disease, and it is now up to the individual to decide whether or not to go outdoors. However, since the risk of infecting others is high during the first 5 days of illness, people should refrain from going outside for at least 5 days.

Until 10 days have passed, there is a possibility of the virus spreading, so please be considerate of those around you by wearing a mask and avoiding contact with the elderly.

## 4. Rules for cyclists

As of April 1, 2023, it will be mandatory to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.

Many cyclists are confused about whether bicycles can be ridden on the road or on sidewalks.

In general, bicycles should be ridden on the road on the left side. As an exception, bicycles may be on sidewalks when indicated by blue circular road signs or road markings that depict pedestrians and bicycles side by side.

When bicycles go on the sidewalk, pedestrians have priority and bicycles must travel at a speed that allows them to stop immediately on the side closer to the road.

It is against the rules to ring your bicycle bell to make pedestrians move out of the way or to pass them without slowing down. Please ride carefully and with consideration for pedestrians.

Recently, you may see blue arrow markings on roads. These pavement markings indicate the location and direction of bicycle traffic to promote safe passage for bicyclists. They are also used to inform both motorists and bicyclists of the location of bicycle traffic on the roadway.

On roads with these arrows, bicyclists should ride over the markings.

When riding on the roadway, stay on the left side of the road and face the direction of the arrow.