



Health Department Flu Update: 9/30/09

(**please feel free to share this email with co-workers, family and friends**)

What We're Doing

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois is beginning to experience an increase in influenza-like illness and laboratory confirmed influenza. This is just one more reminder of the ever-changing and unpredictable nature of influenza.

At the Lake County Health Department/Community Health Center we're making an extra push to keep you (as well as your family and friends) healthy! We ask that all our partners, including you, make an extra effort this year to promote flu vaccination and healthy habits. (See the section below on What You Can Do.)

The Health Department's **seasonal flu** vaccination clinics are underway. The clinic schedule can be found at: www.lakecountyflu.com. This site also contains information on other seasonal flu vaccination providers in the area. In addition, seasonal flu vaccination promotional posters are available for download at: <http://www.lakecountyil.gov/Health/want/Flu.htm>

The seasonal flu vaccine will not provide protection against the H1N1 flu and vice versa. This year, more than ever before, the Health Department encourages people to do everything they can to protect themselves and the people they care for from influenza.

H1N1 Vaccine Update

The Department is working in collaboration with a wide range of local healthcare providers to provide the vaccine at clinics and healthcare facilities throughout the county. We will provide you with additional updates as information becomes available.

The Health Department is planning to deploy several short-term and long-term H1N1 vaccination clinics. The dates for these clinics will be determined based on the vaccine delivery dates, but the target dates are mid to late October. Its goal is to provide vaccinations to approximately 25,000 residents. Residents may also receive vaccinations from health care providers, pharmacies and other local facilities.

The target population groups for the H1N1 vaccine are:

- individuals 6 months to 24 years of age
- caretakers and household contacts of children under 6 months of age
- all pregnant women
- healthcare and emergency medical services employees
- people 25 to 64 years of age with underlying medical conditions that put them at high risk for flu-related complications (such as asthma or diabetes).

While vaccine will be available first to those in these target groups, it is expected that there will be enough vaccine over time to accommodate anyone who wants the shot. These target groups were determined based on the spring outbreak of H1N1 in North America and the summer H1N1 outbreak in the Southern Hemisphere.

Senior citizens are normally first in line to receive the seasonal flu shot, but they are not among the current target groups for the H1N1 vaccine. We know that they are not as likely to become ill from H1N1 flu as other groups. Senior citizens should get the seasonal flu shot now and get the H1N1 shot as soon as the high priority groups have received their shots.

Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and your family against this illness. The H1N1 vaccine is being produced the same way as the seasonal flu vaccine.

We expect the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine to have a similar safety profile as seasonal flu vaccines, which have a very good safety track record. Over the years, hundreds of millions of Americans have received seasonal flu vaccines. The most common side effects following flu vaccinations are mild, such as soreness, redness, tenderness or swelling where the shot was given. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will be closely monitoring for any signs that the vaccine is causing unexpected adverse events and we will work with state and local health officials to investigate any unusual events.

The CDC has created a series of Frequently Asked Questions about the 2009 H1N1 Influenza A Vaccine Safety, including information on Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) and Thimerosal.

General Questions and Answers on 2009 H1N1 Influenza A Vaccine Safety

Will the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccines be safe? Are there any side effects to the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine? Are there some people who should not receive this vaccine? How will the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccines be monitored for safety? Will the 2009 H1N1 vaccines that are currently recommended contain adjuvants? More...

http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/vaccine_safety_qa.htm

General Questions and Answers on Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS)

What is GBS? What causes GBS? Who is at risk for developing GBS? Do vaccines cause GBS? How common is GBS, and how common is it after people are vaccinated for seasonal influenza? What happened in 1976 with GBS and the swine flu vaccine? Why did some people develop GBS after they received the 1976 swine flu vaccine? More...

http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/gbs_qa.htm

General Questions and Answers on Thimerosal

What is thimerosal? What are preservatives and why are they used in vaccines? Will the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine contain thimerosal? I have concerns about the use of thimerosal. Is thimerosal still being used? Is thimerosal safe when used as a preservative in vaccines?

More...http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/thimerosal_qa.htm

What You Can Do

Practice Healthy Habits

In addition to getting your seasonal flu shot, help prevent the spread of flu in the workplace, schools and throughout the community by:

- Washing your hands **frequently**
- Staying home if you are sick
- Covering your cough and sneeze

People with flu-like symptoms should stay home from school, work and social gatherings until 24 hours after resolution of their fever. People are more contagious when they have a fever, so

staying home during this time is especially important to not spread the flu to coworkers, friends or fellow students.

Volunteer

The Health Department is also recruiting volunteers for its Lake County Medical Reserve Corps to help with H1N1 flu prevention. For more information, call: (847) 377-8358.

Access Reliable Information

<http://www.lakecountyil.gov/Health/H1N1.htm>

<http://www.flu.gov/>

<http://ready.illinois.gov>

The Health Department's H1N1 hotline number is: 847-377-8350.