

## Vaccination

CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has taken an important step in preparing for a possibly severe upcoming flu season. Every flu season has the potential to cause a lot of illness, doctor's visits, hospitalizations and deaths. Vaccines are the best tool we have to prevent influenza. CDC hopes that people will continue to get vaccinated against seasonal influenza and that individuals in high priority groups will receive the H1N1 vaccine as this becomes more widely available.

Of note, the seasonal flu vaccine does not provide protection against 2009 H1N1 influenza. Similarly, the 2009 H1N1 vaccine is not intended to replace the seasonal flu vaccine. Both are recommended for use this year.

CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), met July 29, 2009, to make recommendations on who should receive the new H1N1 vaccine. While some issues are still unknown, such as how severe the flu season may be, the ACIP considered several factors, including current disease patterns, populations most at-risk for severe illness based on current trends in illness, hospitalizations and deaths, how much vaccine is expected to be available, and the timing of vaccine availability. The first groups recommended to receive the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine include:

- Pregnant women because they are at higher risk of complications and can potentially provide protection to infants who cannot be vaccinated;
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age because younger infants are at higher risk of influenza-related complications and cannot be vaccinated. Vaccination of those in close contact with infants younger than 6 months old might help protect infants by "cocooning" them from the virus;
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel because infections among healthcare workers have been reported and this can be a potential source of infection for vulnerable patients. Also, increased absenteeism in this population could reduce healthcare system capacity;
- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age
  - Children from 6 months through 18 years of age because cases of 2009 H1N1 influenza have been seen in children who are in close contact with each other in school and day care settings, which increases the likelihood of disease spread.
  - Young adults 19 through 24 years of age because many cases of 2009 H1N1 influenza have been seen in these healthy young adults and they often live,

work, and study in close proximity, and they are a frequently mobile population

- Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

No shortage of 2009 H1N1 vaccine is expected, but vaccine availability will be limited initially. Once the demand for vaccine for the prioritized groups has been met at the local level, programs and providers should also begin vaccinating everyone from the ages of 25 through 64 years. Current studies indicate that the risk for infection among persons age 65 or older is less than the risk for younger age groups. However, once vaccine demand among younger age groups has been met, programs and providers should offer vaccination to people 65 or older.

The FDA has approved pandemic H1N1 vaccines from four manufacturers at this time: Novartis, Sanofi Pasteur, CSL Limited, and MedImmune. Each brand has been approved for differing age groups, so attention should be paid to the specific package insert. Regardless of brand, children under the age of 10 will require two doses of pandemic vaccine for full protection, as they would with past and current trivalent seasonal influenza vaccines. Complete guidance on influenza vaccination can be found at:

[www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/h1n1vaccine.htm](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/h1n1vaccine.htm)

The CDC has posted answers to the top ten most frequently asked questions about H1N1 vaccines at:

[www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/vaccination/top10\\_faq.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/vaccination/top10_faq.htm)

See also "Vaccine Administration Recommendations" posted by the California DPH at:

<http://eziz.org/PDF/IMM-978H1N1administration.pdf>

Los Angeles County healthcare providers may register to receive pandemic H1N1 vaccine at

[www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/h1n1/vaccine/](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/h1n1/vaccine/)

or by calling (213) 351-7800.

### **Adverse Events from Influenza Vaccines (9/22/09)**

Please report adverse events associated with receipt of influenza vaccines through DHHS's Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System at:

<http://vaers.hhs.gov/index>

**VAERS – Vaccine Adverse Events Monitoring Program;** To report online, see

<https://vaers.hhs.gov/esub/step1>

or telephone VAERS at 1-800-822-7967.