

# LaGrange County Health Department Nursing Office

[www.lagrangecountyhealth.org](http://www.lagrangecountyhealth.org)

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## 2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccine

### **What are the plans for developing 2009 H1N1 Vaccine?**

Vaccines are the most powerful public health tool for control of influenza, and the U.S. government is working closely with manufacturers to take steps in the process to manufacture a 2009 H1N1 vaccine. Making vaccine is a multi-step process which takes several months to complete. Vaccine is expected to be available in the fall of 2009. More specific dates cannot be provided at this time as vaccine availability depends on several factors including manufacturing time and time needed to conduct clinical trials.

### **Will the seasonal flu vaccine also protect against H1N1 flu?**

The seasonal flu vaccine for this year is not expected to protect against the 2009 H1N1 flu.

### **Can the seasonal vaccine and the 2009 H1N1 vaccine be given at the same time?**

It is anticipated that seasonal flu and the 2009 H1N1 vaccines may be administered on the same day. However, we expect the seasonal vaccine to be available earlier than the H1N1 vaccine. The usual seasonal influenza viruses are still expected to cause illness this fall and winter. Individuals are encouraged to get their seasonal flu vaccine as soon as it is available.

### **Who will be recommended to receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine?**

CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has recommended that certain groups of the population receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine when it first becomes available.

#### Target Groups:

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children less than 6 months of age
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- Persons between the age of 6 months and 24 years

- People 25 years to 64 years of age who are at high risk because of chronic health conditions or compromised immune systems.

We do not expect that there will be a shortage of 2009 H1N1 vaccine, but availability and demand is unpredictable. There is some possibility that initially the vaccine will be available in limited quantities. In this situation, the committee recommended that the following groups receive the vaccine before others:

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children less than 6 months of age
- Health care and emergency medical services personnel with direct patient contact, children 6 months to 4 years of age
- Children 5 years to 18 years of age who have chronic medical conditions.

The committee recognized the need to assess supply and demand issues at the local level. The committee further recommended that once the demand for vaccine for these target groups has been met at the local level, programs and providers should begin vaccinating everyone from the age of 25 years to 64 years. Current studies indicate the risk for infection among persons age 65 years or older is less than the risk for the younger age groups. Therefore, as vaccine supply and demand for vaccine among younger age groups is being met, programs and providers should offer vaccination to people over the age of 65 years.

### **Do those that have been previously vaccinated against the 1976 swine influenza need to get vaccinated against the 2009 H1N1 influenza?**

The 1976 swine flu virus and the 2009 H1N1 virus are different enough that it's unlikely a person vaccinated in 1976 will have full protection from the 2009 H1N1. People vaccinated in 1976 should still be given the 2009 H1N1 vaccine.

### **Where will the vaccine be available?**

Every state is developing a vaccine delivery plan. Here in LaGrange County we will be working with local physicians to help us administer the 2009 H1N1 vaccine. Plans are currently being made as to how this will all work. Information will be posted on the county website, advertised in the LaGrange Standard, the Kendallville News Sun and Thunder Country 105.5. You may also call the Health Department at (260) 499-4182 for more information.