

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
10/07/09

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H1N1 Vaccine Arrives in Mills County

Who should receive it?

For months, two primary questions about H1N1 influenza have been circulating. When will the H1N1 vaccine arrive and who should get it? The first question has been answered as shipments of the H1N1 vaccine begin arriving in Mills County this week.

“Allocation of the vaccine to Mills County is being determined by the state according to population,” said Sheri Bowen, Agency Administrator of Mills County Public Health.. “As a county, we then work with providers to administer the vaccine, including Glenwood Physicians Group, Alegent Health, Dr. Fryzek, Medicap Pharmacy and Ruffner Pharmacy. Vaccine will continue to be shipped to Iowa through the winter months. Mills County Public Health will establish clinic opportunities as soon as adequate vaccine is available.”

As for who should receive the vaccine, Mills County is following CDC guidelines and Iowa Department of Public Health Direction, which state the H1N1 vaccine should first be made available to the following subset of priority groups.

- pregnant women,
- people who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age,
- health care and emergency medical services personnel,
- persons between the ages of 6 months through 4 years of age, and
- people from ages 5 through 18 years who are at higher risk for novel H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems.

When adequate vaccine is received, priority groups will be expanded to the following:

- pregnant women,
- people who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age,
- health care and emergency medical services personnel,
- persons between the ages of 6 months through 24 years of age, and
- people from ages 25 through 64 years who are at higher risk for novel H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems.

Because the first shipment of H1N1 vaccine is in the form of a nasal spray, which is not recommended for some people (such as pregnant women and children with asthma), it is important to talk to your health care provider about getting the vaccination.

The seasonal flu vaccine and the H1N1 vaccine can be given at the same time and at any time in any sequence with one exception: if using the live nasal spray vaccine for both the seasonal flu and H1N1, they should be given 4 weeks apart to ensure the best protection from both vaccines.

In addition, it remains important to take personal actions to prevent the spread of the virus:

- Cover your cough,
- Clean your hands, and
- Contain germs by staying home when ill.

A statewide toll-free hotline has been established for public questions about seasonal and H1N1 influenza at 1-800-447-1985. More information can also be found at www.idph.state.ia.us or by contacting Mills County Public Health at 527-9699 or www.mcph.millscoia.us.

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