

2009 – 2010 Flu Season Questions and Answers

www.ihacares.com Update #3

Q. How does the flu actually spread?

A. Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through the coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day **before** symptoms develop and up to 5-7 days **after** becoming sick. **That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.**

Q. How long should someone stay away from others if they have Influenza-like illness?

A. The CDC recommends that people with an influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8°C]), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Q. I understand the CDC has updated its recommendations on who should be vaccinated. What are those new recommendations?

A. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that certain groups of the population receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine first. These target groups include:

- 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 and 24 years old
- people 25 through 64 years of age who are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems

Q. Are doses of H1N1 vaccine set aside for children 6 months thru 9 years of age who require a second dose?

A. No. H1N1 influenza vaccine availability is expected to increase during the next several weeks, so vaccine will not be held in reserve for patients who already have received 1 dose but might require a second dose.

Q. Can a child, who requires 2 doses of H1N1 flu vaccine and who received the first dose by injection, receive the second dose with the 2009 H1N1 live nasal spray vaccine, or vice versa?

A. When feasible, the same type of vaccine (live nasal spray or inactivated injection) should be used for both doses. Mixed vaccine types, however, are preferable to not completing the 2 dose series. The 2 doses must be separated by at least 28 days.

Q. Where can I receive the most up-to-date information about seasonal and H1N1 flu?

A. Please visit the IHA website at www.ihacares.com or call the IHA flu hotline at 734.761.7300. Flu information is updated at least three times per week and a number of IHA Seasonal and H1N1 clinics are now listed.