

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BUREAU FLU ADVISORY

December 18, 2009



VOLUNTEER UPDATE

Due to the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays, the next regular flu advisory will be distributed on January 8, 2010. If any urgent information or guidance is released during this hiatus, a special advisory will be issued.

Update on Massachusetts

H1N1 Activity

This week, the amount of influenza-like illness (ILI) in the state was downgraded from "Regional" to "Local" activity. As of December 17, 2009, 1900 confirmed cases of H1N1 have been reported throughout Massachusetts since April of 2009. ILI has decreased dramatically over the past few weeks and is now in line with what is normally seen at this time of year. To read this week's complete influenza report [click here](#). Although the amount of influenza in the state has dropped in recent weeks, there could be another spike in illness in the coming months. Therefore, DPH encourages all residents to get vaccinated and to continue to practice good health hygiene.

H1N1 Vaccine Recommendations Expanded to All Residents

To date, DPH has distributed over two million doses of the H1N1 vaccine; enough to protect the vast majority of the highest risk residents against the H1N1 flu. Although DPH continues to focus on vaccinating members of the priority groups, the state has recently received several large shipments of vaccine, and expects to continue to receive additional large amounts in the near future. As a result, DPH has asked local public health departments to begin planning large-scale public flu clinics open to all residents. As these clinics are planned they will be posted on <http://flu.masspro.org>.

All public clinics will offer the vaccine free of charge; however if you do have insurance, please bring your insurance card. This will help defray costs incurred by local officials in holding clinics.

H1N1 Pediatric Vaccine: Non-Safety Related Voluntary Recall

As part of its quality assurance program, Sanofi Pasteur, Inc., performs additional routine, ongoing testing of influenza vaccines after the vaccine has been distributed to health care providers to ensure that vaccines continue to meet required specifications. In recent testing of the amount of antigen in its influenza A (H1N1) monovalent vaccine, Sanofi Pasteur found four distributed lots of single-dose, pre-filled syringe pediatric (0.25 mL.) vaccine with antigen content lower than required potency levels. The manufacturer is conducting a non-safety related voluntary recall of these affected lots of vaccine. Parents of children who received vaccine from the recalled lots do not need to take any action, other than to complete the two-dose immunization series if not already completed. [To read the complete DPH advisory click here](#).

CDC Update

During the week of December 6-12, 2009, influenza activity decreased. This is the seventh consecutive week of national decreases in ILI after four consecutive weeks of sharp increases. While ILI has declined, visits to doctors for influenza-like illness remain slightly elevated nationally. Eleven states are reporting widespread influenza activity; a decline of three states from last week. They are: Alabama, Alaska, California, Delaware,

Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Nevada, New York, and Virginia.

The CDC provides [updated 2009 H1N1 vaccine supply and distribution data](#) daily at around 12:00pm on their website.

In addition, the CDC posted a number of new and updated resources on its website <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>. Included are:

New: Q & A Non-Safety-Related Voluntary Recall of Certain Lots of Sanofi Pasteur H1N1 Pediatric (0.25 mL, for 6-35 month olds) Vaccine in Pre-Filled Syringes
http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/syringes_qa.htm

Updated: Interim Recommendations: Special Considerations for Clinicians Regarding 2009 H1N1 Influenza in Severely Immunosuppressed Patients
<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/immunosuppression/index.htm>

Updated: H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu): Resources for Obstetric Health Care Providers
http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/clinician_pregnant.htm

Updated: H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu): Resources for Pregnant Women
<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/pregnancy/>

Updated: General Questions and Answers on Thimerosal
http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/thimerosal_qa.htm

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