



# H1N1 TALKING POINTS

- **H1N1 (Swine) Flu is a new influenza virus causing illness in people and was first detected in people in the U.S. in April 2009. The virus is contagious and is spread from person-to-person worldwide.**
- **Most people who have become ill with the novel H1N1 virus have recovered without requiring medical attention. A large number of the hospitalized patients with H1N1 have had one or more other medical conditions such as pregnancy, diabetes, heart disease, asthma and kidney disease.**
- **H1N1 is spread the same way seasonal flu spreads such as coughing or sneezing by people with influenza or by touching something, such as a surface or object, with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.**
- **Symptoms of H1N1 flu are also similar to the seasonal flu such as fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also experience vomiting and diarrhea.**
- **Unlike seasonal influenza, novel H1N1 influenza tends to disproportionately affect children and younger adults. Current studies indicate that the risk for infection among persons aged  $\geq 65$  years is less than the risk for persons in younger age groups.**
- **People infected with seasonal and H1N1 flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from one day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems.**
- **Protect yourself from getting H1N1 or Seasonal Flu by covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissue away after you use it. Wash your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth since germs spread this way. Try to avoid close contact with sick people and if you are sick stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone.**



# H1N1 VACCINE TALKING POINTS

- The first small shipment of the 2009 H1N1 vaccine arrived at the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department on October 13<sup>th</sup> and shipments should continue to arrive weekly in varying amounts. They will be both nasal and injectable forms.
- The first doses are targeted to healthcare providers, EMS/paramedics who respond to medical emergencies and are in direct patient care.
- The other target groups for vaccine are children 6 months to 24 years old, pregnant women, individuals who care for infants younger than 6 months and those 25 through 64 years who have certain medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza-related complications.
- Those providers (physicians, nurse practitioners, and others) who wish to receive and administer the vaccine to their patients can pre-register at this time. This can be accomplished by visiting KCHD website at [www.kchdvw.org](http://www.kchdvw.org) need to pre-registering.
- There are two forms of the vaccine:
  - “shot” – an inactivated vaccine containing killed virus that is given with a needle, usually in the arm. The flu shot is approved for use in people 6 months of age and older, including healthy people, people with chronic medical conditions and pregnant women.
  - “spray” – the nasal spray is a vaccine made with live, weakened viruses that do not cause the flu, sometimes call LAIV for live attenuated influenza vaccine. The spray is approved for use in healthy people 2 years to 49 years of age who are not pregnant.
- At this time no shortage of 2009 H1N1 vaccine is expected.
- You can take the shot versions of both at different sites at the same time. However, both the sprays cannot be taken at the same time.
- Side effects of the shot are soreness, redness or swelling at the injection site, low-grade fever and aches and will begin soon after the shot, are usually mild and last for one to two days.
- Side effects of the nasal spray in children are runny nose, wheezing, headache, vomiting, muscle aches and fever. Side effects of the nasal spray in adults are runny nose, headache, sore throat, and cough.
- It takes 2 weeks from the flu vaccine to develop immunity.
- The vaccine is free of charge if provided by the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department and if you receive the vaccine from your healthcare provider they may charge an administration fee.