



For Immediate Release:

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Public Health H1N1 Vaccine Clinics Launch in LA County

Pregnant women, individuals 6 months to 24 years old, and those 25 to 64 years of age with chronic health conditions among priority groups for vaccine

LOS ANGELES – The first H1N1 vaccine clinics sponsored by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health have begun. The clinics will ensure that residents in the CDC-designated priority groups, who do not have health insurance or a regular source of health care, are able to get **free** H1N1 vaccine. Vaccine will be available in the injectable flu shot and the nasal spray vaccine formulations. Those who have health insurance and are in the H1N1 priority groups should obtain vaccine from their usual sources of health care, as vaccine becomes more widely available over the next several weeks.

“Preventing the flu is both an individual responsibility and a community effort,” said Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky. “Our County Department of Public Health will be working with several partners to conduct H1N1 vaccine clinics in cities and unincorporated areas throughout the County. The public should know that through these efforts, everyone at high risk will have an opportunity to protect their health with this vaccine.”

“The City of Los Angeles is pleased to be a part of this important public health outreach in providing H1N1 vaccine to its residents. Though flu may not be considered by some to be a serious illness, some groups are at higher risk, and they especially should get vaccinated to protect themselves and their loved ones,” said Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

A schedule of H1N1 vaccine clinics can be found on the Public Health website at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov, on www.flushotla.com, or by calling the LA County Information line at 2-1-1 from any landline or cell phone. Some private providers that are offering H1N1 vaccine may be listed on www.findaflushot.com. Additionally, certain chain pharmacies, such as Walgreens, CVS or Ralphs, may be offering H1N1 vaccine starting the first week of November.

Priority groups for H1N1 vaccine are:

- Pregnant women,
- People who live with or care for infants under six months of age,
- Healthcare and emergency services personnel,
- Young people aged six months to 24 years of age,
- People aged 25 through 64 years of age who have health conditions that put them at higher risk for flu-related complications.

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“Vaccine is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of flu, and flu vaccines have a very good safety track record. The H1N1 vaccine is prepared in the same manner as other seasonal flu vaccines,” said Jonathan E. Fielding, MD, MPH, Director of Public Health and Health Officer. “I urge all those in the vaccine priority groups, which are based on their risk for a severe case of H1N1, to join me in getting the vaccine. Prevention starts with you.”

Pregnant women, in particular, are at high risk for complications and are urged to get the H1N1 vaccine.

Supplies of vaccine will be growing as the fall progresses, and residents who do not fall into any of the priority groups will be able to get the H1N1 vaccine later this fall.

The 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine has an excellent safety profile. It does not cause the flu. It is the best tool we have to protect you and your loved ones, and to fight the spread of flu through our community. The other effective ways to protect yourself and others are simple, healthy habits such as washing your hands, covering your cough, and staying home from work or school if you get sick.

Influenza, including pandemic H1N1 flu, is a highly contagious illness that is rapidly spread from person-to-person through uncovered coughs and sneezes. The virus may also be spread by touching an infected object or another person’s hand with the flu virus on it, and then touching one’s mouth, nose or eyes. People infected with flu can spread the virus to others one day before symptoms appear, and up to five days or more after showing signs of illness.

The Department of Public Health is committed to protecting and improving the health of the nearly 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Public Health comprises more than 4,000 employees and has an annual budget exceeding \$750 million. To learn more about Public Health and the work we do, please visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov> or visit our YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/lapublichealth>.

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