

# The Vaccinator

A Newsletter of the Communicable Disease Reporting System (CDRS)  
Childcare Edition – Fall 2009

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## Seasonal & Pandemic Influenza

### What the Differences Are

What you do this flu season impacts the children in your care, the health of you and your family, and your community. We need everyone to follow critical steps to prevent the spread of flu — both pandemic and seasonal flu. Symptoms and vaccine recommendations may differ for a pandemic and seasonal flu.

	Seasonal Influenza	Pandemic H1N1 Influenza
<b>Symptoms</b>	Fever, cough, fatigue, headache, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, chills, muscle aches, vomiting.	Fever, cough, fatigue, headache, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, chills, muscle aches, vomiting, diarrhea.
<b>Occurrence</b>	Annually during winter in temperate climates	Rare occurrence
<b>Vaccine Target Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children 6-59 months of age</li><li>• Pregnant women</li><li>• Household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of infants &lt; 6 months of age</li><li>• All persons with certain chronic conditions (asthma, diabetes, cardiac disease, etc)</li><li>• Household contacts of persons with health conditions associated with higher risk of influenza complications</li><li>• Healthcare workers</li><li>• Persons &gt; 50 years of age</li><li>• Residents of long-term care facilities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pregnant women</li><li>• Household contacts of infants &lt; 6 months of age</li><li>• Healthcare and EMS personnel</li><li>• All persons 6 months – 24 years of age</li><li>• Persons 25-64 with health conditions associated with higher risk of influenza complications</li></ul>
<b>Vaccine Number of Doses</b>	1-2 doses depending upon prior history of seasonal influenza exposure or immunization	2 doses expected because of little or no exposure or immunity to pandemic influenza A H1N1 virus

Source: [http://www.flu.gov/season\\_or\\_pandemic.html](http://www.flu.gov/season_or_pandemic.html).

### How Influenza Vaccine Is Made

Normally, every year in June, officials meet to decide which virus strains to include in the vaccine for the following fall. They take the same “recipe” for making vaccine from the previous year, and replace last year’s strains with the strains chosen for the current year. The vaccine is then released to the public in September. The process only takes about 3 or 4 months because they already have the basic elements of the vaccine developed and tested.

The new pandemic vaccine being developed for 2009 is based on the usual seasonal influenza vaccine, except that the seasonal influenza strains have been replaced with the pandemic influenza A virus strain. This vaccine does not replace the seasonal vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine does not protect against the pandemic flu.



Franklin County



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# 4 Steps for Preventing the Spread of Flu

## 1 Wash your hands.

Handwashing is your best defense against getting and spreading any type of flu. For proper, protective handwashing, wash with warm water for 20 seconds. Wash often, especially after coughing and sneezing and before preparing or serving food or drinks. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are an effective backup (with at least 60% alcohol) when soap and water are not available.

Teach children to wash their hands and model it for them. Resources on teaching handwashing to children can be found at [www.publichealth.columbus.gov](http://www.publichealth.columbus.gov).



## 2 Cover your cough.

Use the sleeve of your clothes, elbow or shoulder to cover your cough or sneeze. You may also cover your nose and mouth with a tissue, then throw the tissue away. Teach children to do the same.

## 3 Stay home from school or work when sick.

- Anyone who is sick, especially those who may be experiencing a fever of more than 100°F, coughing, muscle aches, severe headache and, in some cases, vomiting and diarrhea, please stay home from school or work and contact a health-care provider.
- CDC now recommends that people with 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.
- Strictly enforce rules about keeping children out of childcare with a fever.
- Staff must also stay home when sick - critical to stopping the spread of flu.
- Encourage parents to have a backup plan for childcare in case of illness. It is best to have two people to count on as backups.

## 4 Get vaccinated.

In October 2009, it is expected that a vaccine against pandemic H1N1 will be available. At first, the vaccine supply will be limited, so it is being given first to people who are at highest risk for severe illness. Among these priority groups are:

- Household and care providers for children under 6 months of age
- Children 6 months up to people 24 years of age
- Pregnant women

**Get Your Seasonal Flu Shot** – The pandemic H1N1 vaccine is not replacing the seasonal flu vaccine – it is intended to be used with seasonal flu vaccine to protect people. So getting your seasonal flu shot to protect you and those you care for is still important.

**The final page of this newsletter is a handout you can use with parents.**

### Questions?

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns:

- Communicable Disease Prevention Nurse at 614-645-1474 (Columbus) or 614-462-3097 (Franklin County)
- CPH Immunizations Program Manager at 614-645-0178 (Columbus) or 614-462-3689 (Franklin County)

For current information about reportable infectious diseases, check out [www.cdrsinfo.com](http://www.cdrsinfo.com)  
Columbus and Franklin County Communicable Disease Reporting System (CDRS)



# Influenza:

## Information for Parents

What you do this flu season not only impacts the health of you and your family, but also your community. We need everyone to follow these critical steps to prevent the spread of flu — both seasonal flu and pandemic H1N1.

### Critical Actions To Prevent Getting and Spreading the Flu

#### Wash your hands.

Wash your hands often, especially after you cough or sneeze. Proper handwashing is using soap and warm water, washing for 20 seconds, and using a towel or elbow to handle the faucet and doorknob. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective (with at least 60% alcohol) when you can't wash your hands. Teach children good handwashing by modeling it for them.

#### Cover your cough.

Use the sleeve of your clothes, elbow or shoulder to cover your cough or sneeze. You may also cover your nose and mouth with a tissue, then throw the tissue away. Teach children how to do the same.

#### Stay home when sick.

Anyone who is sick should stay home from school or work. Flu symptoms to watch for are a fever of more than 100°F, coughing, muscle aches, severe headache and, in some cases, vomiting and diarrhea. People should stay home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. Contact a healthcare provider about your symptoms.

#### Make a backup plan for childcare.

Have a backup plan if your child cannot go to their usual place for childcare, if your childcare provider becomes ill or if there is wide-spread illness. It is best to have two people you can count on to be your backups. Make sure that your child's school or childcare has multiple contact numbers.

#### Get vaccinated.

A vaccine is planned against H1N1flu. At first, the vaccine supply will be limited, so it is being given first to people who are at highest risk for severe illness. At this time, children are in one of these groups — specifically children age 6 months up to 24 years. This vaccine is not replacing the seasonal flu vaccine – so getting your seasonal flu shot is still important.

#### Stay informed.

Visit [www.columbuspandemicflu.com](http://www.columbuspandemicflu.com) for flu information and updates. You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter. Listen for updates about vaccinations for children and adults.