



News Release

Arkansas Department of Health

For More Information Contact: Ann Wright,
Director of Communications, 501-661-2474

For Immediate Release
October 22, 2009

H1N1 Vaccine Supply Slow to Arrive in State Mass Vaccination Clinic Update

(Little Rock) — Anticipated supplies of the H1N1 Influenza A (Swine Flu) vaccine have been arriving in the state but in limited quantities, according to public health officials. James Phillips, M.D., Branch Chief, Infectious Disease at the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) said, “We would like to be ready to vaccinate everyone who wants to get the vaccine at next week’s mass seasonal flu clinics, but right now we don’t see how that can happen. We are requesting the maximum amount of vaccine doses that we can order each week, but supplies are limited. **At the Mass Flu Clinics on October 29, 30, 31, we will have seasonal vaccine available for the general public; however, the H1N1 vaccine will be available only for pregnant women and children ages 6 months to 4 years until supplies run out.**”

Previously scheduled school clinics statewide will continue to give seasonal flu and H1N1 vaccine as supplies allow to students whose parents request the vaccine for their children.

As Arkansas gets more H1N1 vaccine, those doses will continue to be given to priority groups first. These include pregnant women, children ages 6 months to 24 years, health care workers and emergency medical responders, people caring for infants under 6 months of age, and people ages 25-64 years with underlying health conditions (like asthma and diabetes).

The ADH expects to eventually receive enough H1N1 vaccine for any Arkansan that would like to receive vaccine. It is important that every Arkansan get both the seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccine during this flu season. Additional Mass Flu Clinics will be scheduled at later dates.

Flu is a sickness that infects the nose, throat and lungs and is caused by the influenza virus. If you’re young and healthy, the flu vaccine may be 70 to 90 percent effective in preventing illness.

Children less than 9 years who have never received a seasonal flu shot before will need a second seasonal flu shot for full protection. Children less than 10 years will also need to receive a second H1N1 shot. Parents will need to contact a local ADH health unit or health care provider, see if vaccine is available and take their children in for a second shot 4 weeks after the first shot.

The 2009 H1N1 vaccine is produced in the same manner as regular seasonal flu in the same manufacturing plants. The H1N1 vaccine simply contains a different strain of influenza virus. Reactions to all flu vaccines might include a mild soreness and redness near the site of the shot and perhaps a little fever or slight headache. The flu shot cannot give you the flu.

Persons who should not receive influenza vaccine for health reasons are: persons with a severe allergy (i.e. anaphylactic allergic reaction) to hens' eggs and persons who previously had onset of Guillain-Barre syndrome.

Influenza symptoms include fever over 100 degrees, headache, extreme fatigue, sore throat, muscle aches, dry cough, runny or stuffy nose, and occasionally stomach symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

The influenza virus is spread through coughing or sneezing and by touching a hard surface with the virus on it and then touching the nose or mouth. The best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated each year.

For more information go to www.healthyarkansas.com or www.flu.gov .

###