

PRINCETON REGIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FLU FACTS

There has been a recent flood of reports on the news, in the newspapers and on the internet about the flu – both the “regular” seasonal flu and the H1N1 “swine” flu. The Princeton Regional Health Department offers these important flu facts:

Each year, seasonal flu appears in the late fall/early winter and is gone by late spring. Seasonal flu shots are available to everybody through a variety of sources including private doctors, public clinics, and retail establishments such as pharmacies. The Princeton Regional Health Department will offer flu shots to senior citizens who reside in either Princeton Borough or Township on October 20 and 26 at the Suzanne Patterson Senior Center. For more information call (609) 924-7108.

H1N1 flu vaccine is a novel (new) vaccine for a novel virus. “We expect that vaccine availability, at least at first, will be limited”, stated David Henry, Health Officer for the Princeton Regional Health Department. “We anticipate that we will receive approximately 10,000 doses of vaccine for our high risk population.” The priority, high risk groups who will be the first to be offered H1N1 flu vaccination include:

- Youth 6 months to 24 years of age
- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- Health care providers and emergency medical services workers
- People between the ages of 25 and 64 who have certain medical/health conditions

Private health care providers who receive H1N1 vaccine must follow the same priority group protocol as the public health departments. After everyone in the priority groups who wants to be vaccinated has been vaccinated, public and private providers will then vaccinate others, as availability of vaccine allows.

Both seasonal flu and H1N1 flu vaccine can be given at the same time, but in different sites (for example, one in each upper arm). Like seasonal flu shots, H1N1 flu vaccination is voluntary.

While vaccination is a primary way of preventing the flu, there are other important strategies to reduce your risk of infection:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm, or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs spread hand-to-face.
- Stay 4-6 feet away from people who are sick, coughing, or sneezing.
- Cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm (or sleeve) not into your hands. If you cough or sneeze into a tissue cover both your nose and mouth. Throw away the tissue and wash your hands.
- **If you are sick stay home from work, school, or doing errands for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines.**
- Clean things that are touched often like door handles, telephones, faucets, etc.

Remember:

- The seasonal flu vaccine will protect you from regular “seasonal” flu, NOT the H1N1 “swine” flu.
- A vaccine to protect you from the H1N1 flu will be available later this fall, probably in mid-October.
- It is important to be protected from BOTH seasonal flu and the H1N1 flu since both can make you sick.

Up-to-date information on H1N1 flu and vaccination can be found on the Health Department website, which can be accessed through both the Princeton Borough (www.princetonboro.org) and Township (www.princetontwp.org) websites.



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