



H1N1 Influenza Update September 18, 2009

Summary

- **Osceola County update:** Seasonal Flu vaccine is available in many urgent care and walk-in clinics and should be widely available by September 16th. Seasonal influenza viruses is still expected to cause illness this fall and winter. Individuals are encouraged to get their seasonal flu vaccine as soon as it is available. Those at high risk for serious complications and their close contacts should start go and get seasonal Flu vaccines earlier rather than later in September. For more information, please visit our website at: <http://www.osceolahealth.org>.
- **CDC summarized 36 novel H1N1-associated pediatric deaths through 8/8/09.** 67% of the 36 children had at least one underlying medical condition putting them at increased risk for complications from influenza; 92% of these high-risk children had neuro-developmental conditions (e.g., cerebral palsy, developmental delay, muscular dystrophy). Bacterial co-infections were present in 10 (43%) of the children for whom lab results were provided, eight of whom were previously healthy; one child was obese). 61% of the children received antivirals, but only 11% (2) of these were treated within 2 days after illness onset, the time period when antivirals are thought to be most effective.
- **Clinicians should be aware of:** the potential for severe influenza illness, including death, in children with neuro-developmental conditions and/or co-morbid pulmonary conditions; other potential for severe bacterial infections (e.g., *S. aureus* including MRSA, *S. pneumoniae*, and *S. pyogenes*) in children with influenza; and other need for prompt initiation of antiviral treatment in persons at risk for severe complications of influenza (including healthy children <5 years, especially those <2 years of age) and any person with influenza who requires hospitalization. See <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr> 9/4/09 issue.
- **Effective August 30, 2009, CDC began compiling information from states** related to **all** influenza and pneumonia-associated hospitalizations and deaths for the 2009-2010 season using new case definitions. The number of reported hospitalizations and deaths was "re-set" to zero on August 30. The new definitions allow states to report to CDC hospitalizations and deaths (either confirmed OR probable) resulting from all types of influenza, not just those from 2009 H1N1 flu. This is a broader set of data than states were previously reporting as it now includes 1) laboratory-confirmed influenza for all types of influenza, and 2) pneumonia and influenza cases identified from hospital records, most of which will not be laboratory confirmed.
- The first week of this new case definitions was reported in the September 11, 2009 *FluView*. The number of influenza and pneumonia-related hospitalizations and deaths reported in this new system is 1,380 hospitalizations and 196 deaths. This reflects data from a single week, the week ending September 5, 2009, to see current report, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>.
- **CDC recommends a three-step approach to fighting the flu:** vaccination (individuals should get vaccinated for seasonal flu as soon as the vaccine is available from their health care provider), everyday preventive actions including frequent hand washing and staying home when sick, and the correct use of antiviral drugs if your doctor recommends them.
- **2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccine:** Vaccines to prevent the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus have not yet been licensed; however, approximately 45 million doses of licensed vaccine are expected to be available by mid-October 2009, and doses will continue to become available through December. The Federal government has purchased a total of 195 million doses of the vaccine.
- The national 2009 H1N1 vaccine program is voluntary. Those interested in vaccination for themselves or their children will soon receive additional information from many sources including the Health Dept., school officials and media about the vaccine's risks and benefits so they can make an informed decision.
- The number of doses of vaccine required for immunization against 2009 H1N1 influenza virus has not been completely established. Preliminary clinical trial data regarding number of doses required for full protection is promising, and more will be forthcoming from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the vaccine companies. Updates will follow as more data becomes available.
- Current studies indicate that people aged 65 years and older are less likely than younger people to be infected with the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus.

