

Health Department
847-933-8252

November 2, 2009

To: All Parents and Guardians of Children attending School, Preschool, or
Daycare in the Village of Skokie

From: Catherine A. Counard, M.D., M.P.H.; Director of Health

Re: Update regarding Skokie Health Department Plan to Offer H1N1 Influenza
(Swine Flu) Vaccinations in Skokie Schools and Daycare Facilities

As you are aware, the Health Department is offering H1N1 (swine flu) influenza vaccinations at all Skokie schools, preschools, and daycare facilities during October and November. We have had a very successful campaign thus far; with clinics held at 25 locations as of today. I wanted you to know, however, that as a result of the national H1N1 vaccine shortage, the Health Department will now be requiring that all children and staff who do not have a contraindication receive the nasal spray form of the vaccine. Unfortunately, we have not yet received the additional 20,000 doses of injectable vaccine that were expected to arrive last week, and must reserve the remaining injections for those who cannot receive the spray (pregnant women, children 6 months – 2 years, persons older than 50, and persons with underlying health conditions such as diabetes, asthma or heart disease).

The vast majority of children and staff are able to receive the nasal spray vaccine. If you prefer to have your child receive the injectable form of vaccine, there will be another opportunity to be vaccinated during the large community clinics scheduled for December at the Oakton Park Community Center, 4701 Oakton Street. Proof of residency or school attendance will be required. The dates and times are below:

- Thursday, December 3, 12:00- 8:00PM
- Sunday, December 6, 9:00AM – 5:00PM
- Wednesday, December 9, 12:00 – 8:00PM
- Saturday, December 12, 9:00AM – 5:00PM

I have included revised information regarding the clinics and vaccine formulations on the following page. Thank you very much for assisting the Health Department as we work to limit the spread of H1N1 in the community.

Sincerely,

Catherine A. Counard, M.D., M.P.H.
Director of Health

School/Daycare Clinic Information

- Each clinic will be conducted by the Health Department at the school or daycare, and will be for children and staff of the facility.
- Each school or daycare will have one clinic.
- Vaccine will be administered free of charge.
- Vaccination is voluntary, and vaccine will only be given to children who have a Consent Form signed by a parent or guardian.
- Parents of young children (second grade and younger) are encouraged to be present during the clinic when your child is vaccinated. Parents of older children are also welcome to be present if desired.
- If your child is unable to participate in the clinic held at school or daycare, they may receive H1N1 vaccine during the Health Department's large community vaccination clinics scheduled for the first two weeks of December.

Form of Vaccine Offered

- Similar to seasonal influenza vaccine, the H1N1 influenza vaccine is available as a nasal spray and a shot. Both forms are safe and effective.
- The nasal spray is approved for persons 2 – 49 years old who have no medical conditions. If your child has a medical condition (asthma, diabetes, etc), he/she should not receive the nasal spray. If you have any questions about your child's specific medical condition please call your doctor.
- Children between 6 months and two years of age will receive the influenza shot as the nasal spray has not been approved for this age group.
- If your child received the nasal form of seasonal influenza vaccine within the past four weeks, then they should receive the H1N1 influenza shot. If it has been longer than four weeks, they can receive the H1N1 nasal spray.
- Children less than 10 years of age should receive two doses of vaccine, spaced at least 21 days apart, in order to have full protection. The second dose of vaccine can be administered by your child's doctor, during the December community H1N1 vaccination clinics mentioned above, or during a later Health Department clinic. The Health Department will ensure that your child is able to receive both doses of vaccine.

Final messages

- The 2009 H1N1 vaccine does not protect against other seasonal influenza viruses which are also expected to circulate this winter. Please have your child vaccinated against seasonal influenza.
- Please do not send your child to school if your child is ill with fever, sore throat or cough. Your child may return to school after they have been without fever for 24 hours.
- If you have questions about the clinic logistics or forms that must be completed, please contact your school, preschool or daycare administration. If you have questions about influenza virus, the 2009 H1N1 vaccine, or who should be vaccinated, you are welcome to call the Health Department at 847-933-8252.
- Additional information is available on the Skokie website located at www.skokie.org. Skokie residents are also encouraged to sign up to receive E-news updates (a link is on the Village website) or tune in to radio 1660 AM.