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## **H1N1 (Swine) FLU UPDATE**

### **Thursday, September 24, 2009**

#### **Flu Surveillance**

The Albany County Department of Health (ACDOH) has continued to see low levels of novel H1N1 influenza cases reported in our county throughout the summer months. Currently, no significant increase in flu cases has been detected. Pharmacies have reported an increase in the sale of over-the-counter (OTC) flu products during the past week, but there has been no increase in emergency department visits for flu or flu-like symptoms. ACDOH is continuing to monitor influenza activity on a daily basis.

Nationally, the novel H1N1 influenza virus continues to be the dominant flu virus circulating at this time. In New York State (NYS), a recent outbreak of novel H1N1 at Cornell University, which has affected over 700 hundred students, is now showing signs of decreasing. In Albany County, the University at Albany has reported a total of 31 students (out of a total student population of 18,000 students) with influenza like illness (ILI) over the past week. Test results are pending to confirm H1N1. In Rensselaer County, a student at RPI has a suspected case of novel H1N1 and additional cases are anticipated. In the general community, novel H1N1 flu virus activity was considered to be at the local level in NYS for the week ending September 12, 2009. This is one step above the sporadic level for NYS flu activity for the previous week.

#### **Flu Vaccination Information**

- H1N1 vaccine is expected to be released in mid October or sooner. It will likely come in weekly shipments over the next few months. Individuals in the priority groups (see: <http://www.flu.gov/individualfamily/vaccination/index.html#priority>) are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as the H1N1 vaccine becomes available.
- Individuals 10 years and older are likely to only need one dose of H1N1 vaccine. Those younger will require two doses (vaccine dosing will vary by manufacturer).
- Health care providers can pre-register their practices to receive H1N1 vaccine to be administered to their patients and staff. To do so, please visit the following website: <https://hcsteamwork1.health.state.ny.us/pub>. Some providers who pre-register for vaccine will receive it directly from the federal government while others will receive it directly from our department. Detailed information regarding shipment will be provided once vaccine becomes available
- Pharmacists can also still pre-register to obtain vaccine at the above website.

- Due to the current high demand for the seasonal flu vaccine, and considering it is still a bit early in the flu season to receive this vaccine, many doctors are experiencing a delay in receiving shipments of the seasonal flu vaccine. Please be patient. **There is still plenty of time to receive this vaccine.** You may contact your health care provider or visit [www.albanycounty.com/health](http://www.albanycounty.com/health) for more information about seasonal flu clinics.

## Public Information:

### Tips for Businesses:

For information on how to protect your employees' health and safety as well as how to limit a potentially negative impact on the economy, visit <http://www.flu.gov/professional/business/index.html>.

### Tips for Parents

- Have your child vaccinated for the seasonal flu. Schedule a flu shot, (when vaccine is available) for yourself and your family.
- Keep your child home if they are sick for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine.)
- **Teach your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children not to share personal items like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. If a tissue is unavailable, cover up coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand.
- If your child has chronic health problems and displays flu-like symptoms, contact your doctor immediately.

For more information for parents visit: <http://flu.gov/individualfamily/parents/>

Other resources for more information about seasonal flu and H1N1 flu:

The Albany County Department of Health

[www.albanycounty.com/health](http://www.albanycounty.com/health)

Call Albany County's 24-hour automated flu information line at (518) 447-4505 or contact our staff at 447-4589 or 447-4648 between 8:30am and 4:30pm

The New York State Department of Health H1N1 flu hotline at 1-800-808-1987

[www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

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