



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER – Governor
RICHARD M. ARMSTRONG – Director

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
450 West State Street, 10th Floor
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0036
PHONE 208-334-5625
FAX 208-334-5926

NEWS RELEASE

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Tom Shanahan
(208) 334-0668

Idaho Public Health Orders First 2009 H1N1 Vaccines

The Idaho Division of Public Health ordered the first 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine for Idaho today, the first day orders were accepted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC authorized Idaho to order 9,000 doses, which are anticipated to begin arriving in the state early next week.

The CDC is making vaccine available as it is being produced by manufacturers and distributing the vaccine nationwide based on population.

“There is going to be a very limited supply of H1N1 vaccine available during the first weeks of shipments, so initially vaccination will not be widely available to everyone recommended to receive it. Eventually, we hope there will be enough for everyone who wants to be vaccinated,” says Dr. Christine Hahn M.D., Idaho State Epidemiologist. “Vaccines are the best way to protect yourself and your family, so we encourage people to take advantage of the vaccine as it becomes available.”

The initial order of vaccine for Idaho will be shipped directly to hospitals, community health centers, and all Idaho local public health districts. Idaho’s seven local public health districts are working with the Division of Public Health on arrangements for future distribution. The vaccine will eventually be available through many private healthcare providers.

Public health officials are targeting H1N1 vaccine to people recommended by CDC advisors to receive the vaccine, including those at higher risk of health complications from H1N1 infection, and those more likely to transmit infection to the most vulnerable. These include:

- Pregnant women,
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age,
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel,
- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age,
- Persons aged 25 through 64 who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

(more)

The first shipment of vaccine, however, will be nasal spray, which cannot be used for everyone identified in the target groups. Vaccine shots, which can be used more broadly, are expected to be available for ordering by the Division of Public Health within the coming weeks.

There is no charge for the 2009 H1N1 vaccine; however, private healthcare providers may charge an administration fee. Local public health districts will provide free vaccination at public health clinics this fall for people who cannot afford to pay the fee. People who are interested in receiving the vaccine can check availability by calling their local public health district, or visiting their health district's website. Information also is available at www.panflu.idaho.gov.

Detailed information about the 2009 H1N1 pandemic virus is available from:

- The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's website at www.panflu.idaho.gov
- Idaho Public Health District websites
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/
- U.S Dept. of Health and Human Services website at www.flu.gov
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Hotline: 1-800-CDC-Info (1-800-232-4636).

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(Editors: For more information please contact DHW Public Information Officer Tom Shanahan, 208-334-0668 or your District Health Department Public Information Officer.)