

To Protect and Promote the Health and the Environment of the People of Kittitas County

2009 H1N1 (Swine Flu) Information Sheet

November 17, 2009

Changes from the November 10, 2009 information sheet are in **bold print**.

The 2009 H1N1 influenza virus has not changed in severity. Those at highest risk of complications from 2009 H1N1 influenza include individuals with asthma, diabetes, suppressed immune systems, heart disease, kidney disease, neurocognitive and neuromuscular disorders, or those who are pregnant.

Symptoms

- Symptoms of this illness are the same as those for seasonal flu. Most people will have a fever >100 °F and a cough and/or sore throat. Other symptoms may include headache, muscle ache, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, and diarrhea. More adults have reported vomiting and diarrhea with 2009 H1N1 flu than with seasonal flu.

Testing

- There have been four confirmed cases of 2009 H1N1 flu in Kittitas County. One of these cases was in May, the other three were in Central Washington University students in September.
- There are likely many more cases, but the Washington State Department of Health has recommended limiting testing since we know 2009 H1N1 flu is circulating in Washington State. Testing is now being used only to monitor for increased severity of illness.
- The only people who are currently being tested for 2009 H1N1 flu are people who are hospitalized with flu-like symptoms or people who die that have had flu symptoms immediately before their death.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that 99% of samples testing positive for flu are the 2009 H1N1 flu.

Treatment

- Since 2009 H1N1 flu is no more serious than seasonal influenza at this time, the Washington State Department of Health recommends that you treat flu symptoms as you would during a normal flu season. If you would not normally see a health care provider because of the severity of your symptoms, it is not necessary to see a health care provider. If your symptoms worsen, contact a health care professional.
- Those with higher risk for complications of flu should contact their health care provider if they become ill. This includes pregnant women or women who have given birth within the past two weeks, people 65 and older, people who have chronic health conditions, and children younger than five (but especially children younger than two years old).
- Most patients with flu-like illness will do well if they are drinking plenty of fluids, taking medications for fever if necessary, and staying home until 24 hours after fever has gone away *without the use of fever reducing medications*.

Vaccination

- The best way to prevent 2009 H1N1 flu is vaccination. A vaccine has been developed and tested, and began arriving in Kittitas County on October 13 for use in those 6 months and older.
- The vaccine to protect against 2009 H1N1 flu is a separate vaccine than the seasonal flu vaccine that is currently available.
- Residents are encouraged to use their normal route for immunizations. If you have a local health care provider, contact your provider to see if vaccine is available. If you do not have a local health care provider, contact the Kittitas County Public Health Department at (509) 962-7515.
- Initially, when vaccine availability is limited, the vaccine will be administered only to the priority groups identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). At this time, these groups are:
 - pregnant women,
 - health care and emergency services personnel,
 - people who live with or care for children less than 6 months of age,
 - people between the ages of 6 months through 24 years of age, and

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- people from ages 25 through 64 years who are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems.
- Due to delays in vaccine manufacturing and the limited amount of vaccine available in Kittitas County, vaccine is currently reserved for those in the five listed priority groups listed above. A limited amount of vaccine is being distributed to each primary care provider in Kittitas County. Due to high demand, health care providers may not yet have enough vaccine for each of their patients that fall into one of the five priority groups. In these cases, the provider may need to limit vaccine administration to certain groups.
- Due to national delays in vaccine production, vaccine may not be available to the general public until January.
- As more vaccine becomes available it will be distributed to health care provider's offices for those who fall into priority groups not yet designated to receive vaccine.
- Children 6 months through 9 years of age will need to receive two doses of vaccine at least 28 days apart to be most effective.
- School-based immunization clinics began in November **and will continue at least into January**. This is an opportunity for children to be vaccinated during school hours. We encourage parents/guardians to allow their children to participate as it will reduce the burden on local medical providers.

School-based Vaccination Clinics

- Vaccination clinics are being held at local schools as vaccine supply allows, during school hours.
- There is no cost for vaccines given during school-based clinics.
- Currently scheduled clinics or previously held clinics include:
 - Cle Elum-Roslyn Elementary School, November 3
 - Easton School, November 4
 - Damman School, November 5
 - Kittitas Elementary School, November 9
 - Mt. Stuart Elementary School, November 10
 - Ellensburg Christian School, November 12
 - Thorp Schools, November 12
 - Morgan Middle School, November 16
 - **Lincoln Elementary, December 1**
 - **Valley View Elementary, December 2**
- Packets that include a consent form are being sent home with students or mailed to families as clinics are scheduled. Packets for currently scheduled schools can be viewed on the Kittitas County Public Health Department 2009 H1N1 website at www.co.kittitas.wa.us/response/h1n1.asp.
- Students will *not* be vaccinated unless the consent form is returned to school.
- Parents/guardians do not need to be present.
- Due to the current vaccine supply, **nasal spray will not be available for students at middle and high schools. All participating middle and high school students will receive injections. Students at elementary schools will receive vaccine in the nasal spray form unless they are ineligible because of their health history.** Those **elementary school** students who are ineligible for the nasal spray will receive an injection.
- Only students of the schools holding the clinics will be eligible for vaccination. Staff members and older/younger siblings or other family members of students will not be able to receive vaccine at the school-based clinics.
- A second school-based clinic will be held at elementary schools to administer the second dose of vaccine recommended for children through age 9. Parents/guardians will receive a second consent/health history form that will need to be returned for children to receive the second dose. These clinics will be scheduled as vaccine supplies allow.

Prevention

- Anyone who is sick with a respiratory illness and fever should stay home, not go to work or school, wash their hands often, and cover their cough/sneeze. Stay home until 24 hours after fever has gone away *without the use of fever reducing medications*.

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- The best way to protect yourself and others from illness is to:
 - Avoid contact with ill individuals;
 - Stay home from work or school when you are sick;
 - Cover your cough and/or sneeze; and
 - Wash your hands many times a day.
- It is recommended that all individuals who have influenza-like illness wear a face mask when they must enter crowded areas, such as a health care facility. Those with influenza-like illness should not enter crowded areas unless absolutely necessary, especially without a face mask.
- If you are planning to visit a health care provider and you have influenza-like illness symptoms, call ahead to request a mask to wear in the health care facility.
- Health care providers treating individuals with influenza-like illness are being recommended to use special face masks called N95.

For More Information

- Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2009 H1N1 flu website at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.
- Visit the Washington State Department of Health 2009 H1N1 flu website at www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1flu or call 1-888-703-4634.
- Visit the Kittitas County Public Health Department 2009 H1N1 website at www.co.kittitas.wa.us/response/h1n1.asp.

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