

Delaware General Health District

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NEWS RELEASE

DELAWARE GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT WEEKLY INFLUENZA UPDATE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE PHOTO ATTACHED

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DELAWARE, OH, December 4, 2009 –This is the weekly flu update issued by the Delaware General Health District.

As families gather over the holidays, the Health District expects to see an increase in influenza or other infectious disease activities. Because of the increase in travel that is expected over the next few weeks, the Delaware General Health District is reminding persons in high risk categories to get vaccinated for H1N1 now. By getting the vaccination now, sufficient immunity will be developed before the end of December.

The Delaware General Health District is pleased to announce that more than 11,000 doses of H1N1 immunizations have been delivered at our clinics in Delaware County. The next large-scale clinic will take place on Sunday, December 6, 2009 from 12 – 4 p.m. at Big Walnut High School, 555 S. Old 3C Highway, Sunbury.

The local Health District has broadened eligibility to those most at risk for H1N1 flu. Eligible priority groups include:

- Pregnant women.
- Children and young adults aged 6 months to 24 years.
- Children under age 10 who received their first dose of H1N1 vaccine prior to Nov. 9 will be eligible to get their required second dose.
- People who live with or care for babies under 6 months old.
- Persons aged 25-64 years with chronic medical conditions (Asthma, Neurological Conditions, Chronic Lung Disease, Heart Disease, Blood Disease, Endocrine Disorders, Kidney Disorders, Liver Disorders, Metabolic Disorders, Weakened Immune System due to medication or disease).
- Health care providers.

The Health District will have a live web-cam at the clinic site so residents can observe the line to determine waiting time. Please log onto www.delawarehealth.org and click on webcam to view the live feed.

LOCAL CASES: We had no confirmed H1N1 cases reported to us this week. However, Grady did report an individual who was hospitalized and tested positive for influenza A. Further testing showed that this person tested negative for H1N1, so seasonal influenza may be creeping up on us.

SCHOOLS: The number of children, students and adults who are staying home due to Influenza Like Illness (ILI) has decreased the last couple weeks to minimal levels. Pockets of illness do remain in the community, which we would expect for this time of year. For example, one local elementary reported that 19% of its staff and 6.5% of its students was out at least one day last week due to ILI.

SENTINEL SITES AND OTHER SURVEILLANCE: The number of people being seen by healthcare providers due to ILI continues to be higher than normal, but it has declined over the last couple weeks. Pharmacy sales of most over-the-counter medications to treat Influenza-Like Illness have returned to normal levels.

The Delaware General Health District has exhausted all of its seasonal flu vaccine supplies.

For the latest information on Delaware General Health District H1N1 flu immunization clinics, log on to www.delawarehealth.org or phone 740-203-2015 or 2-1-1.

The Delaware General Health District urges county residents to take the following steps to be healthy this holiday season:

- The first step is to travel only when you are well.
- The second is to wash your hands often. That can be with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- The third is to cover your cough and sneeze with tissues or with your sleeve.
- And the fourth is to get vaccinated against flu, particularly if you're in a targeted population. If you're if one of the groups recommended for flu vaccine, either the seasonal flu vaccine or the H1N1, stay informed about where you could be vaccinated in your community.

By practicing prevention, we hope everyone can enjoy the holidays and enjoy getting together with family and friends.