



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**TO: Parents**

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**DATE: October 14, 2009**

**SUBJECT: Novel influenza A (H1N1) Vaccine**

The purpose of this memo is inform you of the Novel influenza A (H1N1) vaccine recommendations for household contacts and caregivers for children aged 6 months or less.

On August 21, 2009, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), a panel made up of medical and public health experts, issued the recommendations for the use of Influenza A (H1N1) 2009 Monovalent Vaccine. One of the priority groups for vaccination with this vaccine is persons who live with or provide care for infants aged less than 6 months. More information on groups recommended to receive the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine may be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm>. In addition, seasonal flu vaccination is also recommended for those who live with or provide care for children aged less than 6 months. Children aged less than 6 months are too young to receive either type of influenza vaccine (H1N1 or seasonal flu) themselves.

Approximately 2,000 Connecticut residents have tested positive for novel influenza A (H1N1) virus infection. This is a small percentage of people who have been ill with this disease; many people experience mild disease and are not tested. Young children are at higher risk for complications and death from the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus, so it is of the utmost importance that they be protected by vaccinating those they come into contact with most often.

Beginning in October, the federal government will be supplying the H1N1 vaccine for free; an administration fee may be charged but should be covered by most private health insurance plans. Those who do not have private health insurance who are vaccinated at a public health sponsored clinic will not have to pay the administration fee. We recommend that all persons who live with or provide care for infants aged less than 6 months contact his or her primary health care provider to inquire about the availability of the H1N1 vaccine at the provider's office. If the H1N1 vaccine is unavailable through an individual's primary health care provider, vaccine may be obtained through other venues, such as locally-organized public immunization clinics or retail outlets (i.e. CVS, Walmart, etc). For more information on where the H1N1 vaccine is available locally, visit [www.ct.gov/dph/mda](http://www.ct.gov/dph/mda) and click on your town of residence, or call 1-800-830-9426.

An additional priority group for early vaccination with H1N1 vaccine is young children aged 6 months through 4 years, and children age 5 through 18 years with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma. Once adequate supply of H1N1 vaccine is available, vaccine will be recommended for all children aged 6 months through 24 years. Because pediatric offices may be overwhelmed with

the number of children requiring vaccination visits this fall, local public health is exploring potential ways to facilitate vaccination. Child day care centers/group day care homes may be contacted by local public health to discuss hosting vaccination clinics.

To keep up to date on when the H1N1 vaccine is recommended for various groups, and for more information on the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus, visit:

- Connecticut Flu Watch web site: <http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) web site: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>