

FOR IMMEDIATE USE

October 8, 2009

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**The Brown County Preparedness Council continues to respond to the Novel H1N1 Pandemic.**

The novel H1N1 virus is widespread Minnesota and throughout the U.S. Everyone can do their part to prevent the spread of illness.

The novel H1N1 virus continues to behave very much like regular seasonal flu, in terms of the severity of illness. For most people the illness has caused mild to moderate illness and is often does not require medical care. That does not mean this illness should not be taken seriously. For some people the illness has become severe and has caused death.

**Symptoms of novel H1N1 influenza are:**

- fever (above 100°F)
- cough
- sore throat
- stuffy nose
- in some cases diarrhea and vomiting

**H1N1 influenza spreads:**

- When a person with flu coughs or sneezes.
- By touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

**The Brown County Preparedness Council will focus on 2 key issues over the next few weeks:**

- Measures to help reduce the spread of the illness
- H1N1 Vaccination

## **MEASURES TO HELP REDUCE THE SPREAD OF H1N1 INFLUENZA**

Standard prevention recommendations include:

- Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- Clean your hands frequently and thoroughly – with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub solution.
- Clean your hands after shaking hands or other close contact with other people – before eating or preparing food, or touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Limit your contact with others who may be ill.

### **If you become ill**

Stay home from work or school – and generally avoid going out in public – remain home until 24 hours after your fever or symptoms resolve without the use of fever reducing medication. You will likely be ill for 5-7 days.

If you do develop possible flu symptoms and you are a healthy adult or child and your illness remains mild you do not need to consult your health care provider.

If you become seriously ill seek medical care – Emergency warning signs

#### **In Adults**

Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen

Dizziness

Confusion

Inability to keep fluids down

#### **In Children**

Fast breathing or trouble breathing

Bluish skin color

Not drinking enough fluids

Not waking up or not interacting

Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held

Flu- like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

Fever with a rash

People at risk for severe flu or flu complications should contact their health care provider if they have flu symptoms or have been exposed to people with flu symptoms. Those individuals include people with an underlying medical condition, pregnant women, young children (especially under age two) and people 65 or older. These people should be evaluated for antiviral medication.

If you are an employer, encourage your employees to stay home if they are sick.

Call before going in for an office visit. You may not need to go in, and if you do need to be seen, a time should be set up when you will not risk exposing others to influenza in the waiting room.

## **H1N1 VACCINE DISTRIBUTION**

The H1N1 vaccine distribution for Brown County is being directed by Brown County Public Health in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health and the hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies in Brown County.

The approved 2009–2010 H1N1 vaccine has arrived for distribution for health care workers. In order to protect those caring for the infected and those at **greatest risk** of complications from H1N1 influenza, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) has developed the following priority groups that will be offered the vaccination before it is offered to the general population.

**The initial shipments will be relatively small and will begin to come in the form of \*flumist\*. In Minnesota and our county, the priority groups that will be vaccinated first include:**

Health care personnel in acute care settings and emergency medical services personnel

We are focusing on these groups because:

They could expose medically vulnerable patients to the virus if they get sick

There could be a significant impact on the health care system if they get sick and have to miss work

This group is at risk for exposure to the virus —a significant number of them were ill with novel H1N1 this spring

**\*Flumist can only be used to vaccinate healthy, non pregnant people age 2-49.**

**As additional shipments of flumist and the injection are received the following priority groups will be addressed:**

Pregnant women,

People who live with or provide care for children younger than 6 months of age,

People 6 months to 24 years of age, and

People 25 to 64 years of age who are at high risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications because of underlying health condition or compromised immune systems.

**When the vaccine is available in Brown County the H1N1 vaccine will be available through health care providers, hospitals and clinics, some pharmacies, and at public health.**

#### **School Based Clinics**

Brown County Public Health in partnership with health care providers and plan to conduct school based H1N1 vaccination clinics throughout the county when vaccine is available for the school age population. Parents will be getting information and consent forms for those clinics towards the end of October through their school. Current information from the Minnesota Department of Health indicates those clinics may be able to occur towards the middle of November.

**Once all the above groups have been addressed the H1N1 vaccine will be available to the general public.**

Distribution for the general public will likely be done in many ways including public clinics, through hospitals, clinics, and local pharmacies.

*Please note — this information is always subject to change as we receive further guidance and direction from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)*

For more information about novel influenza, please visit the MDH Web site at [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us) , the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/update.htm> or contact your health care provider.