



For Immediate Release:

October 1, 2009

First Delivery of H1N1 Vaccine Expected Next Week for LA County Initial doses will be in FluMist® Nasal Spray form

LOS ANGELES – First supplies of the pandemic H1N1 flu vaccine are estimated to arrive around October 9th-10th in some Los Angeles County clinics and doctor's offices. The initial delivery of H1N1 vaccine is expected to be relatively small, and in FluMist® nasal spray form. Additional larger batches of vaccine, the majority of which will be in injection form, are scheduled to arrive every week. It is estimated that by the end of October, doctors and other healthcare providers who ordered H1N1 vaccine should have received some doses.

“While the FluMist nasal spray vaccine may not be appropriate for everyone, we do encourage those who can receive this form of the vaccine to get it,” said Jonathan E. Fielding, MD, MPH, Director of Public Health and Health Officer. “We especially encourage eligible, school-aged children to receive the FluMist H1N1 vaccine. We had expected to see an increase in flu cases once the school year started, and those predictions have come true. Most cases of the pandemic H1N1 flu continue to present mild to moderate symptoms, but some individuals have had serious complications.”

Residents who are eligible and who fall into the priority groups for H1N1 vaccine are encouraged to contact their doctor or regular health care provider later in the month if they are interested in receiving the FluMist nasal spray H1N1 vaccine. Those within H1N1 vaccine priority groups and who **are eligible** to receive FluMist include:

- young people aged two to 24 years of age, in good health,
- healthcare and emergency service workers,
- people who live with or care for infants less than six months of age.

Because FluMist contains “live” virus it is **not** approved for:

- pregnant women,
- people with chronic health conditions or weakened immune systems,
- people with a history of asthma or active wheezing.

H1N1 vaccine injections (“flu shots”), which contain “killed” virus, can be given to all those in the priority groups for H1N1 vaccine. These doses are expected to arrive later this month. Residents who do not fall into any of the priority groups should be able to get the H1N1 vaccine later this fall.

Later this month, Public Health will begin providing H1N1 vaccine to residents who are uninsured and do not have a regular healthcare provider. A list of Public Health sites providing H1N1 vaccine will be available in mid-October. To find a non-Public Health clinic,

-MORE-



pharmacy or health care provider offering either the FluMist nasal spray H1N1 vaccine or the seasonal flu vaccine, visit <http://www.findaflushot.com>. People who do not have access to the internet can call the LA County Info line at 2-1-1 from any landline or cell phone.

FluMist nasal spray H1N1 vaccine is safe and effective, and is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Most common side effects include runny nose or nasal congestion, sore throat, and fever. FluMist cannot give you the flu; it contains a weakened, live virus that has been designed not to cause the flu. The nasal spray vaccine is administered with a quick spray in each nostril, one of the places where the flu virus enters the body. The vaccine then helps the body develop antibodies that help protect from the flu.

Influenza, including pandemic H1N1 flu, is a highly contagious illness that is rapidly spread from person-to-person through uncovered coughs and sneezes. The virus may also be spread by touching an infected object or another person's hand with the flu virus on it, and then touching one's mouth, nose or eyes. People infected with flu can spread the virus to others one day before symptoms appear, and up to five days after showing signs of illness.

“It is vital that residents of Los Angeles County do everything they can to protect their health and the health of their loved ones and community. This is best done through getting vaccinated against the flu, and practicing good, basic hygiene,” said Dr. Fielding. “This includes washing your hands often; covering your nose and mouth with a tissue or your elbow when you cough or sneeze; avoiding touching your mouth, nose and eyes; and staying home if you are sick or keeping your child home if he or she is sick.”

For more information about flu prevention and the priority groups for H1N1 vaccine, please visit our website at <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov>.

The Department of Public Health is committed to protecting and improving the health of the nearly 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Public Health comprises more than 4,000 employees and has an annual budget exceeding \$750 million. To learn more about Public Health and the work we do, please visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov> or visit our YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/lapublichealth>.

###