

Flu Season 2010-2011: Updated Information for Health Care Providers

This year's flu season will raise a lot of questions. Patients will look to you to explain which immunizations they need, when they need them, and why. Here are some facts from the N.C. Division of Public Health that you may wish to share with staff and patients as the flu season approaches.

2010-2011 Seasonal Flu Vaccine

- The 2010-2011 trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine will include pandemic 2009 H1N1 virus. That's the same virus used in the 2009 H1N1 monovalent vaccine.
- The CDC recommends **universal flu vaccination** beginning this year. Everyone six months of age and older should receive a flu vaccine.
- Health care personnel are particularly encouraged to receive flu vaccine, not only to protect themselves from the disease, but to help prevent transmission of the flu to patients, coworkers, family members and others.

Remaining Monovalent H1N1 Vaccine

Check the expiration date. If you have H1N1 vaccine left over from last season, it may be viable. Monovalent H1N1 flu vaccine should not be used as a substitute for trivalent seasonal flu vaccine. However, if there is a resurgence of 2009 H1N1 disease before the seasonal flu vaccine is available, non-expired monovalent H1N1 vaccine may be used.

High Dose Flu Vaccine

A higher dose formulation of an inactivated seasonal influenza vaccine (Fluzone High-Dose) for use in people age 65 years and older will be available in the 2010-11 influenza season. Fluzone High-Dose contains four times the amount of influenza antigen compared to other inactivated seasonal influenza vaccines. Studies are underway to assess the relative effectiveness of Fluzone High-Dose compared to standard dose inactivated influenza vaccine, but results from those studies will not be available before the 2010-11 influenza season. The ACIP has not expressed a preference for Fluzone High-Dose or any other licensed inactivated influenza vaccine for use in people age 65 and older.

**Please, this flu season:
Protect Yourself. Protect Your Patients. Protect Your Family.
Get *Your* Flu Vaccine**