



COUNTY OF MARATHON

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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To: Parents

From: Joan Theurer, RN, MSN, Interim Health Officer

The H1N1 flu is making its much anticipated come back to our community. This letter contains current information about what this may mean for you and your family.

H1N1 flu is a new virus and different from seasonal flu. Currently, there is a new vaccine being made to protect people from H1N1 flu virus. The vaccine is going to be available to everyone, but we want to vaccinate those people who are the most vulnerable for this disease first. Target populations to receive H1N1 vaccine are the following:

- Pregnant women
- **Children between the ages of 6 months and 24 years old**
- Health care providers
- People who provide care for children under the age of 6 months
- Adults with chronic conditions (example: asthma)

The Marathon County Health Department is working in partnership with health care providers and school district staff to coordinate vaccination (flu shot) clinics in your school and community. Clinics will be located throughout the County to assure greater access to the vaccine. Here is what you need to know:

- H1N1 flu shot clinics are being scheduled and will start in late October – early November, depending on the availability of vaccine. The dates will be communicated widely through the community including school newsletters, websites, and local media.
- The recommendation for dosage is not yet established. It may be one dose for adults and two doses for younger children (less than 9 years old). If two doses are required, two H1N1 shot clinics will be scheduled in your community.
- Children are not required to have the vaccine.
- All children will be required to have **parental consent** in order to receive vaccine. Parents may be present when their young children are immunized. (Your school will provide you with more details about how they will accommodate families.)

This new vaccine is made using the same technology as the seasonal flu vaccine. We expect the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine to have a similar safety profile as seasonal flu vaccines, which have a very good safety track record.

Please remember that your best defense is a good offense. You can protect yourself and family members by **washing your hands, covering coughs and sneezes, avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, and stay home if you get sick.** If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

More information about the flu shot will be available in the near future including the shot clinic schedule in Marathon County and vaccination consent forms. For more information you can go to www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu or www.pandemicflu.gov