



# Cayuga County Health Department



## WHY ME? PRIORITY GROUPS TO RECEIVE NOVEL H1N1 INFLUENZA VACCINE

### **Pregnant Women**

This group is at higher risk of complications from the H1N1 influenza. Vaccination of pregnant women could potentially provide protection to infants who cannot be vaccinated.

### **Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than six months of age**

Younger infants are at higher risk of influenza-related complications and cannot be vaccinated. Vaccination of those in close contact with infants less than six months old might help protect infants by “cocooning” them from the virus.

### **Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services personnel**

Infections among health care workers can be a potential source of infection for vulnerable patients. Health care workers need to be protected from patients with the flu. Increased absenteeism in this population could reduce healthcare system capacity.

### **All people from 6 months through 24 years of age**

**Children 6 months to 18 years of age** because there have been many cases of novel H1N1 influenza in this age group. They are in close contact with each other in school and day care settings, which increases the likelihood of disease spread. Children age 6 months through 4 years of age had the most hospitalizations last Spring, while children aged 5 years through 18 years had a significant number of complications and death related to H1N1.

**Young adults 19 through 24 years of age** because there have been many cases of novel H1N1 influenza in these otherwise healthy young adults who often live, work, and study in close proximity. This is also a frequently mobile population.

### **Persons aged 25 through 64 years of age who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza. \*\***

\*\* Medical conditions that confer a higher risk for influenza-related complications include:

- Chronic pulmonary disease (including asthma)
- Cardiovascular disease (excluding hypertension)
- Renal or hepatic disease
- Cognitive, neurological/neuromuscular disorders
- Hematologic disorders
- Metabolic disorders (including diabetes mellitus)
- Immuno-suppression (including immuno-suppression caused by medication or by HIV virus.)

**(OVER) October 2009**



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## **WHY NOT ME? POPULATION NOT INCLUDED IN THE INITIAL NOVEL H1N1 INFLUENZA VACCINATION PRIORITY GROUPS**

**Healthy adults aged 25 through 64 years**

**Adults aged 65 and older**

**The above populations were not included in the priority groups based on the following data:**

The median age of persons with laboratory confirmed H1N1 infections in the United States was 12 years.

The highest infection incidence was among persons aged 5 to 24 years.

The median age of hospitalized persons with laboratory confirmed influenza was 20 years.

The incidence of hospitalization was highest among young children less than 4 years old.

The median age of deaths associated with the infection was age 37 (most deaths in the adult population occurred in persons with underlying medical conditions under the age of 65.)

While the seasonal flu hospitalization and mortality rates for the over age 65 population was the greatest at 90% of the cases; the H1N1 hospitalization rate for the over age 65 population was 5% in Spring 2009.

There were no reported cases of H1N1 influenza among patients in long term health care facilities even when the virus was identified among health care workers in these facilities who worked while ill.

**Once the priority groups are vaccinated and vaccine supply remains available, persons in these two populations will be able to be vaccinated with H1N1 influenza vaccine.**

**ALL PERSONS ARE, HOWEVER, ENCOURAGED TO RECEIVE THE SEASONAL INFLUENZA VACCINE AS SOON AS IT IS AVAILABLE FROM YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.**

(OVER)  
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**Our thanks and appreciation to Chenango County Health Department who developed and designed the original concept for this informational sheet.**