



GETTING READY FOR FLU SEASON
Information for WHA Patients

VACCINATE! *Get your seasonal flu shots as soon as possible!*

Immunization is the most effective means of minimizing illness and severe complications from influenza and it is strongly encouraged. This year we'll have two vaccines: one for the usual "seasonal" strain and one for H1N1 ('swine' flu). H1N1 is a novel virus which means we do not have antibodies for this virus. The number of H1N1 vaccines required is still in question. It is possible that 2 separate injections 3 weeks apart will be required, or 1 may be sufficient. We are still waiting for a recommendation from the CDC on the number of H1N1 vaccines that will be required.

We anticipate the seasonal flu vaccine to be available by the end of September. Our best estimate is that the H1N1 vaccine will be available in mid-October. At this time, plan on at least 2 injections to cover both the seasonal flu and H1N1 flu. Although it is safe to receive the seasonal and H1N1 at the same time, it is hoped that the seasonal flu vaccine is received as soon as available. Both are safe to administer anytime in pregnancy, but not recommended during an illness.

The seasonal '*Flu Vaccine Clinic*' is coming soon to WHA offices. This will provide an opportunity to streamline the efficiency of providing vaccines as quickly and conveniently as possible to all who need them.

Priority groups for each vaccine are listed below:

Seasonal Flu Vaccine	H1N1 (Swine) Flu Vaccine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children from 6 months through 18 old. • Anyone 50 years of age or older. • Women who will be pregnant during influenza season. • Anyone with long-term health problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - heart disease - kidney disease - liver disease - lung disease - metabolic disease, such as diabetes - asthma - anemia, and other blood disorders • Anyone with a weakened immune system due to: HIV/AIDS or other diseases affecting the immune system - long-term treatment with drugs such as steroids - cancer treatment with x-rays or drugs • Health care personnel. <p><i>Anyone who wants to reduce the likelihood of becoming ill with influenza or spreading influenza.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnant women • Postpartum patients & caregivers for children <6months of age • Health care personnel • All person 6 months-24 years of age • Ages 25-65 with chronic health conditions putting them at higher risk of complications • All other individuals as supply allows after the priority populations have been vaccinated

Contraindications- Who should not be Vaccinated? *Consult MD prior to giving the vaccine for the following people.*

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs
- People who are allergic to neomycin or polymyxin
- People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination in the past
- People who developed Guillian-Barre' syndrome within 6 weeks of getting an influenza vaccine previously.
- Children less than 6 months of age
- People who have a moderate or severe illness with a fever should wait to get vaccinated until their symptoms lessen.

TAKE EVERYDAY PREVENTIVE ACTIONS:

Frequent hand washing with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol based hand cleaners are also effective.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or cough in your 'elbow' if you do not have a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- While sick, limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK! Limit contact with others.

If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible. This is to keep from making others sick.

TAKE FLU ANITIVIRAL DRUGS IF RECOMMENDED

If you get seasonal or novel H1N1 flu, antiviral drugs can treat the flu. Not every case of flu should be treated.

- Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) that fight the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body.
- Antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications.
- Antiviral drugs are not sold over-the-counter and are different from antibiotics.
- Osteltamivir (Tamiflu) is the currently recommended drug. It is a pill taken orally, and must be prescribed by your clinician.
- Antiviral drugs may be especially important for people who are very sick (hospitalized) or people who are sick with the flu and who are at increased risk of serious flu complications, such as pregnant women, young children and those with chronic health conditions.
- For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.

INFECTION CONTROL- Our goal is to refer seriously ill patients to the hospital instead of seeing them in our offices. *This is CDC advice to prevent the spread of disease.*

Protect yourself, your family, and friends by diligent routine cleaning.

BE PREPARED AT HOME

Keep at least a two-week supply of nonperishable easy-to-prepare food, water and other critical household and hygiene goods. Keep medical supplies, extra fluids, and pedialyte if you have infants or small children, a thermometer, prescription, and non-prescription drugs, including Tylenol, on hand. Ask about plans at your child's school or day-care for dealing with a pandemic, and develop family plans now.

STAY INFORMED- WATCH FOR UPDATES!

For more information go to:

www.flu.oregon.gov.

www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/

www.redcross.org