

News Release

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The H1N1 Vaccine is Safe

What's the difference between the nasal spray and injection?

Absenteeism at schools across the state has reached record proportions; clinics and ERs are operating at maximum capacity in many cases. As the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus spreads across Iowa, Buchanan County residents are reminded of the importance of receiving the H1N1 vaccination as it becomes available.

“Because H1N1 vaccine supplies continue to be allocated on a staggered basis, Buchanan County is following CDC guidelines for administering vaccine first to priority populations,” said Amy Marlow, Manager of the Buchanan County Health Center Public Health Department. “In Buchanan County, pregnant women and family members in their home, persons living with or provide care for infants age less than 6 months (such as parents, siblings, day care providers), health care and emergency services personnel who have direct contact with patients, children 6 months – 4 years of age, and children and adolescents age 5-18 who have medical conditions that put them at higher risk for flu-related complications (such as asthma and diabetes) are targeted to receive the H1N1 vaccine first.” As the vaccine becomes more widely available, it will be offered to more residents of Buchanan County.

“We want to stress the safety of this vaccine,” said Marlow “Whether you receive the injection or the nasal spray, both vaccines have been thoroughly tested.” Both the injection and nasal spray provide protection against H1N1; the injectable vaccine contains ‘dead’ virus and the nasal spray is a ‘live’ virus vaccine. “

Some people are hesitant to receive the nasal spray because they worry they will ‘catch’ H1N1 from the live vaccine. “We want to assure residents the nasal spray will not give you H1N1,” said Amy Marlow. “Some individuals report a day or so of a stuffy nose, sore throat, or other minor symptoms after receiving the nasal spray; however, these symptoms are nothing compared to how they would feel if they actually came down with H1N1 because they had not received the vaccine.”

Not everyone should receive the nasal vaccine; for example, pregnant women and healthy children 6 months of age up to 2 years of age should receive the flu shot.

A statewide toll-free hotline has been established for public questions about seasonal and H1N1 influenza at 1-800-447-1985. More information can also be found at www.idph.state.ia.us or at the Buchanan County Public Health Department website at www.bchealth.info/publichealth.asp .

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