

November 10, 2009

# H1N1 Vaccine in Mason County

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **When will vaccine be available?**

Shipments of H1N1 vaccine continues to arrive in Mason County each week. Vaccine is available in nasal spray (Flumist) for healthy individuals between the age of 2- 49 who fit into one of the priority groups. Injectable vaccine continues to arrive slowly and is available to those who fit one of the priority groups and do not qualify for the nasal spray.

All vaccine is currently only available to the target high risk groups, as these are the groups at highest risk to contract the H1N1 virus and end up being hospitalized. **The priority groups who qualify for vaccine will now include:**

Pregnant women

Ages 6 months to 24 years

Health Care Workers/ Emergency Medical Personnel

Those who care for children under 6 months

And

Ages 25-64 with chronic medical conditions

Home health care providers of those chronically ill (direct patient care providers) that should be vaccinated include:

Home Health Agency staff who provide in home care

Assisted Living Facility health care staff

Exceptional Forester Staff (EFI)

Eventually there will be plenty of vaccine for anyone who wishes to receive it.

### **Where will I be able to find it?**

Mason County Public Health has been working with local medical providers, clinics and pharmacies to make sure H1N1 vaccine is readily available in our community.

Vaccine will first be available to priority groups through our community providers and clinics. As vaccine availability increases it will be available to you in all the local pharmacies and supermarkets that offer seasonal flu shots as well as our local providers and clinics.

### **The H1N1 nasal spray (Flumist) and injectable vaccine are now available to high risk groups from the following providers:**

Oakland Bay Pediatric

Skokomish Health Center (for tribal members only)

Squaxin Health Center ( for tribal members only)

MGH (for employees and emergency medical only)

Dr. Penoyar

Hoodsport Family Clinic  
Olympic Physicians  
Shelton Family Medicine  
Health Care Center  
Belfair Harrison Primary Care  
Mt. View Women's Health Center: injectable (for pregnant women only)

Mason County Public Health will be partnering with Mason General Hospital to conduct a Mason Community Walk-in Clinic on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> from 5-8 PM at Shelton Family Medicine. This clinic will be open to not only Shelton Family Medicine patients but also other Mason County residents in these priority groups who have no medical provider or cannot afford to pay for the vaccine administration fee. Spanish speaking interpreter services will be available.

### **What do I need to know about H1N1 vaccine for my children?**

Children under the age of 10 will require 2 doses that are given four weeks apart. There will be some thimerosal free vaccine available, the nasal spray (Flumist) is also thimerosal free and safe for healthy children ages 2 and up. As a precaution, Washington law does limit the amount of thimerosal allowed in vaccines for pregnant women and children under the age of 3. Thimerosal free H1N1 vaccine may not always be readily available, so recently the state Secretary of Health suspended the law to ensure that those who need the vaccine will have access to it.

### **Are there people who should NOT get the vaccine?**

Yes, anyone who has ever had a severe reaction to the seasonal flu shot, who has Guillain-Barre syndrome, who has a severe chicken egg allergy or allergy to any other ingredient in the vaccine should not be vaccinated. Your physician can help you make that decision.

### **Can I receive the seasonal vaccine at the same time as H1N1 vaccine?**

Yes. It is ok to receive both vaccines at the same time. You can NOT receive seasonal nasal spray and H1N1 nasal spray at the same time. If you chose to receive both in the nasal spray form they must each be given a month apart.

We do encourage everyone to get their seasonal flu shot as soon as possible and not wait for the H1N1 vaccine to become available.

### **How much will the H1N1 vaccine cost?**

Vaccine providers are not allowed to charge a fee for the vaccine itself. They are allowed to charge a fee to cover the cost of administering the vaccine. The cost of administration is expected to cost between \$15-\$20 on average.

### **What can I do to help prevent flu?**

1. Get your seasonal and H1N1 vaccine as soon as they are available.
2. Wash your hands frequently.
3. Cover your cough (cough into your sleeve).
4. Stay home if you are sick and keep sick kids home from school and daycare.

**Where can I go for the most up to date information on flu?**

Please check the Mason County website at [www.co.mason.wa.us](http://www.co.mason.wa.us) or call our recorded message line at 360-427-9670 ext 599 for up to date information about seasonal and H1N1 flu. Other great websites include: The Washington State Department of Health: [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov) , The Center for Disease Control: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) .