

***H1N1 Vaccination Opportunity for School Children***  
***This information affects the health of your child. Please read!***

November, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The new 2009 H1N1 influenza virus (swine flu) is causing illness around the world and right here in northeastern Connecticut. Many local schools have experienced increased absenteeism. This wave of illness, which began on October 19, 2009, is expected to last 6 to 8 weeks. A third wave of illness is also possible in February/March.

***Vaccination is the best way to protect your child from the flu.*** The Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH) is working with your child's school to give H1N1 influenza vaccine shots to children at school. We will hold vaccination clinics throughout the fall and winter, and your child's school will let you know the specific dates once sufficient vaccine supplies are available. Children under the age of 10 will need two doses of vaccine spaced approximately 28 days or more apart, while people 10 years of age and over will need only one dose. NDDH currently plans to return to schools to provide the second dose for children under the age of 10, however, this decision will be made based on vaccine availability and is subject to change. **There will be no cost to you for this vaccine.**

If you would like your child to be vaccinated at a school-based public health H1N1 flu clinic:

1. **Read** the enclosed Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) called "What You Need to Know" to learn about the disease and the vaccine.
2. **Fill out** the top half of the enclosed form called "Influenza A (H1N1) Public Provider Vaccination Administration Record (PPVAR). Instructions for filling out the form are also included for your convenience.
3. **Sign, date and return** the PPVAR to the school to accept vaccination for your child.

School staff will let you know when the vaccination clinic will take place. Giving consent early will ensure that your child is ready to receive the vaccine as soon as it is available.

Here are other important things for you to know:

- ***The 2009 H1N1 flu vaccination program is NOT a mandatory program, it is completely voluntary.*** While we strongly encourage vaccination, it is a personal choice for you to make for yourself and your family. The enclosed materials may help you to make a decision.
- If your child was ill this past season with flu like symptoms it is recommended that **they still be vaccinated** unless a physician conducted a "Real Time-PCR test" to confirm H1N1 flu. This test may have been performed if your child required **overnight hospitalization** due to severe flu symptoms. Most children were not tested by PCR but assumed to have H1N1 because it is so widespread in our communities. Without confirmation testing there is no guarantee of what type of

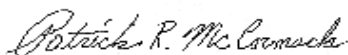
virus they may have had, so vaccination is recommended. Even if your doctor did a nasal (nose) swab and said your child had H1N1 or Influenza Type A, vaccination is still recommended.

- If at any time you change your mind about having your child vaccinated, you can withdraw your consent by providing written notification to your child's school nurse *prior* to the clinic being held.
- If you choose to refuse, the vaccination will not be given to your child.
- If you do not return the consent form, your child will not be vaccinated.
- In order to maintain the safety and security of the school environment, most of our schools are allowing us to conduct vaccination clinics during school hours. Your child will be vaccinated in a safe and familiar environment with immediate access to their teachers and school nurses. If you feel the need to accompany your child for their H1N1 vaccination, we respectfully request that you bring your child to their primary care provider.

If you have any questions about the vaccine or the vaccination clinics, please call NDDH at 860-774-7350, Monday-Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Your child's health care provider can also answer your questions about the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus and may be able to give your child the seasonal influenza vaccine and the 2009 H1N1 vaccine.

There are more than 16,000 school children in northeastern Connecticut. This is the largest public health effort undertaken to date by our region. Thank you for your consideration and efforts in helping us protect the health of our school children and communities.

Sincerely,



Patrick McCormack, MPH  
Interim Director of Health

Superintendent of Schools



Douglas C. Waite, MD  
Medical Advisor, NDDH  
VP Medical Affairs & Quality,  
Day Kimball Healthcare

Learn more at:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/parents>

Vaccine Myths and Realities: <http://www.flu.gov/myths/index.html>

Connecticut Department of Public Health: [www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch](http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch)

Day Kimball Healthcare: [www.daykimball.org](http://www.daykimball.org)

Northeast District Department of Health: [www.nddh.org](http://www.nddh.org)