



Iowa Department of Public Health Seasonal and 2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccine Priority Groups

2009-2010 Seasonal Influenza Vaccine

- children 6 months through 4 years
- older children with increased risk of complications from influenza
- persons with chronic diseases and at increased risk of complications from influenza, irrespective of age
- persons with compromised immune systems
- persons 65 years of age or older
- residents of long-term care facilities, irrespective of age

2009 H1N1 Vaccine

- pregnant women
- persons who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- health care and emergency medical services personnel
- persons 6 months through 24 years of age
- persons 25 through 64 years of age who are at higher risk for H1N1 influenza infection because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems

What does priority group mean?

A priority group refers to persons who are recommended to receive vaccines before others if vaccine is in limited supply. Persons in priority groups are at highest risk to be infected or to have complications from infection.

Why do we have priority groups for the seasonal influenza and 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine?

Vaccine supplies are sometimes limited. Priority groups are established to ensure that individuals who have a higher risk of serious illness from an influenza infection can be vaccinated first.

Why are the priority groups different for seasonal influenza and for 2009 H1N1 vaccine?

Studies of the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus show serious illness occurring in different populations than those affected by seasonal flu. The priority groups for both 2009 H1N1 influenza and the seasonal strain of influenza include persons at a higher risk for each virus.

If I am not in the priority group for seasonal influenza, should I avoid getting the vaccine?

There is or soon will be enough seasonal vaccine available for everyone. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) recommends that all Iowans get their seasonal flu shot.

If I am not in the priority group for 2009 H1N1 influenza, should I avoid getting does that mean I should not get the vaccine?

The 2009 H1N1 injectable vaccine is approved for use in anyone 6 months of age and older. Currently the supplies of 2009 H1N1 vaccine are limited. As more vaccine becomes available, there will be an expansion of the groups who may receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine.

Are there other ways to prevent the spread of illness?

Yes! Even though vaccines are one of the ways to protect people from getting the disease, it is also important to take these three basic steps to protect your health and others.

- **Cover** your cough. Use a tissue or your elbow.
- **Clean** your hands. Use soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- **Contain** germs. Stay home when sick.