

FLU BULLETIN #7

H1N1 Vaccine Supply

Manitoba has received 17,500 doses of vaccine with adjuvant this week. In addition, Manitoba has received 9,200 doses of vaccine without an adjuvant that is being targeted initially to pregnant women in the province. Both vaccines have been distributed to the regional health authorities (RHAs).

There has been no indication of how much vaccine will be received in the coming weeks. Manitoba does not expect another shipment until next Wednesday. As of Nov. 4, Manitoba had received a total of 232,700 doses of vaccine. At the end of the day yesterday, nearly 160,000 shots had been given to Manitobans. All vaccine has been sent to RHAs to administer through clinics and by appointment. At peak, Manitoba can give nearly 31,000 shots a day.

H1N1 Flu Shots

RHAs are adapting their clinics based on the supply and demand for vaccine, reaching the priority groups, and other geographic and population realities of each RHA. Some RHAs expect to run out of vaccine with adjuvant by the end of this week or early next week and may continue to postpone clinics. Other RHAs expect to return to focusing on the original priority group.

Many clinics are now administering the vaccine without an adjuvant to pregnant women. The Public Health Agency of Canada has recommended that pregnant women at any stage of their pregnancy should receive the H1N1 flu shot without adjuvant. Data shows that pregnant women who do get the H1N1 virus are more likely to suffer complications.

H1N1 Flu

The number of people with flu-like illnesses in Manitoba increased in the last week confirming the second wave of the H1N1 flu is well underway.

There are currently 14 individuals hospitalized in intensive care with severe respiratory illnesses, 10 are on ventilators, but only one has been confirmed to have H1N1 flu. Since early October, there have been 20 people who have required intensive care for severe respiratory illness.

To date, the individuals who are in intensive care reflect the same risk factors that caused severe illness in the spring during the first wave of the pandemic flu. The individuals are in the first priority group for vaccine and are those Manitobans who would benefit the most from getting the H1N1 shot now:

- children aged six months to under five years old;
- anyone of Aboriginal ancestry (First Nations, Métis or Inuit);
- disadvantaged individuals (for example, the homeless);

- people living in remote or isolated areas;
- people under 65 with a chronic medical condition or other risk including severe obesity, substance abuse or alcoholism;
- anyone with a weakened immune system or those who live with or care for them;
- those who live with or care for infants under six months old;
- single parents or anyone solely responsible for a dependent;
- health-care workers and medical first responders; and
- pregnant women who should consult with their doctor about the right vaccine to receive.

As of Nov. 2, Manitoba Health is reporting 24 additional lab-confirmed cases of H1N1 bringing to 66 the total number of known cases confirmed since Oct. 6 when the second wave of H1N1 flu began. Lab-confirmed cases do not reflect the actual number of people with the illness. Individuals with milder illness are not being tested, nor do the numbers indicate the seriousness of disease any individual may experience.

Additional measures to help prevent flu infections:

- Cover your cough by coughing into your elbow or sleeve or use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. Place the tissue in the garbage.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Hand sanitizers may also be effective.
- Reduce the spread of germs. Limit touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Maintain your health by making healthy food choices, being physically active and getting enough sleep.

Manitobans are reminded to watch for signs of severe illness. If you or a family member has any of the following symptoms, go directly to an emergency room, nursing station or health-care provider or call 911:

- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing;
- severe or worsening symptoms (increased thirst, reduced strength or a decrease in urination frequency);
- dehydration or no urination for 12 hours;
- drowsiness or confusion;

- fever in an infant under three months old; and
- any serious symptoms or signs of serious illness in a child under five years of age.

More information on H1N1 flu is available at www.manitoba.ca/flu or Health Links-Info Santé at 788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 (toll-free).