



Van Wert County Health Department, H1N1 Update 10-5-09

As we have known since spring of this year, both seasonal and H1N1 pandemic influenza are present in our surrounding area and we should be taking precautions to guard the health of ourselves and our loved ones.

The cornerstone for seasonal flu prevention is vaccination. Seasonal flu vaccine is readily available now. Check with your family physician, your local pharmacy, and Community Health Professionals for times of walk-in clinics. The Van Wert County Health Department has depleted its supply of adult seasonal flu vaccine, but pediatric seasonal flu vaccine is available for children aged 6 months through 18 years of age. Call or check the Van Wert County Health Department website at www.vanwertcountyhealth.org for times of walk-in clinics.

Symptoms of the flu include: fever of 100 degrees or higher, dry cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, tiredness and respiratory congestion. If you think you or a family member has the flu, contact your health care provider. Seek immediate help for difficult breathing.

Good hygiene habits to help avoid the flu are: Washing your hands frequently with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers when soap and water are not available, coughing into your sleeve or if you use a tissue, throw it away and wash your hands. If you are sick, stay at home while you are ill and consult your physician or nurse practitioner for advice.

In the coming weeks, the Van Wert County Health Department will begin to receive vaccine for H1N1 pandemic influenza. The first doses will be in the form of nasal Flumist and will target healthcare and EMS personnel. When vaccine arrives for shots, the initial target groups will include along with healthcare and EMS workers: pregnant women, household contacts and caregivers of children under 6 months of age, children and young adults 6 months through 24 years, and persons 25-64 with underlying health problems such as diabetes, asthma and lung disease, heart disease, and disorders of the immune system. Eventually there will be enough of this vaccine for all, but initially we will need to serve the groups most affected by this new virus.

Thank you,
Paul A. Kalogerou, MD
Van Wert County Health Commissioner

