



For Immediate Release: 10.19.09

From: David Powers
Communications Director
708.358.5781

Contact: Margaret Provost-Fyfe
Public Health Director
708.358.5480

Appointments required

Health officials preparing to offer H1N1 inoculations to those most at risk

With the first shipments of the injectable H1N1 *swine* flu vaccine now beginning to arrive locally, the Oak Park Department of Public Health is making plans to offer inoculations by appointment at Village Hall and the Main Fire Station.

Those most at risk for contracting the virus and potentially suffering the greatest complications will be the first priority for receiving the vaccine, Health Department officials say. These include individuals six months to 24 years old, pregnant women, adults ages 25 - 64 with a chronic illness such as diseases of the heart and lungs, asthma, diabetes and HIV, healthcare workers and caretakers of children less than six months old.

Vaccinations will be given at no charge to Oak Park residents, but appointments are required. Individuals in the at-risk categories should call 708.358.5601 to schedule an appointment for vaccination.

Afternoon, evening and Saturday appointments will be offered at the Main Fire Station, 100 N. Euclid Ave., and Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Health Department officials say every attempt will be made to accommodate appointment requests, but residents may need to be flexible, depending upon vaccine supplies and demand. The first appointments will be for Sat., Oct. 24.

Children under the age of 10 will need two shots, approximately a month apart. Both appointments can be made at the same time.

In the meantime, public health officials are urging everyone to take steps to minimize the chances of becoming ill, including the following:

- *Practice good hand hygiene.* Wash your hands often with soap and water – especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective.
- *Practice respiratory etiquette.* The main way the flu spreads is from person to person in the droplets produced by coughs and sneezes, so it is important to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands.
- *Stay home if you are sick.* Staying at home means that individuals with the flu keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others.

For more information on H1N1 clinics, contact the Oak Park Department of Public Health at health@oak-park.us or 708.358.5480. Information, including links to the CDC and Illinois Department of Public Health, is posted at www.oak-park.us – just look for the H1N1 icon.

###