



H1N1 VACCINE

H1N1 (commonly referred to as swine flu) remains a threat, but scientists have worked hard to develop an effective vaccine, which was recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Here is the latest information regarding the H1N1 vaccine:

When?

Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced that she expects the vaccine to become available mid-October (with very limited supplies possibly available earlier that month).

How Many Shots?

Though experts had previously predicted the necessity for two H1N1 vaccination shots, clinical trials are now showing that the vaccine protects with only one dose. However, this is in addition to the normal seasonal flu shot, so people will need to get two separate shots to protect against both seasonal and novel H1N1 flu. Seasonal flu shots are already becoming available in most areas.

Priority Recipients

It is projected that there will be limited quantities of the H1N1 vaccine initially (though officials expect that eventually there will be enough vaccine available for everyone who wants it).

Therefore, the Centers for Disease Control's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends these priority groups for receiving the vaccination first:

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children younger than six months old
- Health care and emergency medical services personnel
- Persons between six months and 24 years old
- Persons ages 25-64 who are at higher risk for novel H1N1 due to chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems