

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology  
and Immunization Section**

401 Fifth Avenue South, Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98104-1818

**206-296-4774** Fax 206-296-4803

TTY Relay: 711

[www.kingcounty.gov/health](http://www.kingcounty.gov/health)



**Health Alert: H1N1 Vaccine Update, 10 January 2010**

**Action requested:** King County healthcare providers should continue to actively vaccinate patients to prevent influenza A H1N1 infection.

**Background:** Although H1N1 activity has decreased to low levels, the virus is still circulating.

- National estimates are that approximately 15% of the general population has been infected, therefore many persons remain susceptible.
- In addition, in the 1957-58 pandemic, a later winter-early fall “third wave” occurred that hit older adults particularly hard after earlier waves that were more severe in younger persons. Although we cannot predict if a third wave of H1N1 will occur, vaccinating as many persons as possible will minimize the impact of a recurrent H1N1 outbreak and perhaps provide residual protection into next season.

Among those who have been waiting to get vaccine are people 65 years and older as well as people 25-64 who do not have a chronic medical condition. These groups are encouraged to get vaccinated. While older people have been less likely to be infected with the 2009 H1N1 virus compared to younger people, there have been severe infections and deaths from 2009 H1N1 in every age group, including people 65 and older. Some outbreaks among older people living in long-term care facilities also have been reported nationally.

- Vaccination with 2009 H1N1 vaccine continues to be particularly important for people in the initial target groups, including
  - pregnant women;
  - household contacts and caregivers of infants younger than six months of age;
  - health care and emergency medical services personnel;
  - all individuals six months through 24 years of age; and
  - individuals 25 through 64 years of age who have medical conditions associated with higher risk of complications from influenza.

It is important for unvaccinated people in these groups to take advantage of the ample vaccine supply and get vaccinated now.

As of this week, approximately 757,000 doses of H1N1 vaccine have been received in King County and an estimated 643,000 people have been vaccinated against H1N1 influenza by our healthcare providers and pharmacies. For people who can't afford to pay, Public Health is holding community H1N1 vaccination clinics during January. More information is available at [www.kingcounty.gov/health/H1N1](http://www.kingcounty.gov/health/H1N1).