### **Waushara County Health News**

Written by Waushara County Health Department Tuesday, January 14, 2014 7:09 AM

## Influenza Activity

Seasonal influenza activity continues to increase throughout Wisconsin. Further increases throughout the state are expected during the coming weeks.

Since the start of the season, influenza 2009 AH1N1 viruses have been the most common among influenza viruses circulating in Wisconsin and nationally. This is the same virus responsible for the influenza pandemic in 2009. So far, the CDC has not detected any significant changes among circulating 2009 H1N1 viruses. The 2009 H1N1 viruses that CDC has examined this season are like those that have circulated since the pandemic.

## **Influenza Severity**

The Wisconsin Division of Public Health has identified a significant increase in hospitalization, ICU admissions and the need for mechanical ventilation among young and middle aged adults (18-64 years old) and pregnant women in the state.

On Dec. 24, the CDC issued a Health Alert Network (HAN) discussing the recent reports of severe infection associated with 2009 A/H1N1 virus infection especially among young and middle-aged adults, many of whom were infected with influenza A (H1N1). The Health Update is available at http://emergency.cdc.gov/HAN/han00359.asp.

These severe flu outcomes are a reminder that flu can be a very serious disease for anyone, including young, healthy adults.

#### Influenza Vaccine

The Wisconsin Division of Public Health and the CDC urges people who still have not been

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vaccinated to get their vaccine now. The influenza vaccine is available and recommended for all individuals aged six months and older.

Waushara County Public Health Department is out of influenza vaccine for the remainder of this flu season. Contact your physician's office to see if they have vaccine available. All flu vaccines this season include the 2009 A/H1N1 component.

People at high risk for serious flu complications include: people with underlying chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, or neurological conditions; pregnant women; those younger than five years or older than 65 years of age; or anyone with a weakened immune system.

The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccination as the first and most important step in protecting against flu and its potentially serious complications. Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, missed work due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths.

Flu vaccines are offered in many locations, including doctor's offices, clinics, health departments, retail stores, pharmacies, health centers, and by many employers.

# Flu Vaccine Options

There are several flu vaccine options available for the 2013-14 flu season.

Traditional flu vaccines made to protect against three different flu viruses (called "trivalent" vaccines) are available this season. In addition, flu vaccines made to protect against four different flu viruses (called "quadrivalent" vaccines) also are available.

Influenza vaccination from previous years or illness from 2009 A/H1N1 does not provide full protection against 2009 A/H1N1. Annual vaccination against flu is strongly recommended.

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# **Influenza Illness and Antiviral Drugs**

People who are at high risk for influenza complications should see their health care provider promptly if they get flu symptoms. Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.

A health care provider can determine if the patient needs influenza antiviral drugs. Antiviral drugs can treat flu illness and prevent serious flu complications.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not received any reports of local, regional or national shortages of influenza antiviral drugs from manufacturers at this time. Oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) and zanamivir (Relenza®) are effective for treatment or prevention of influenza infection.