



St. Joseph County Health Department

"Promoting physical and mental health and facilitating the prevention of disease, injury, and disability for all St. Joseph County residents"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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First Death Associated With Novel H1N1 Virus In St. Joseph County

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY- Health officials confirm that there has been one death in St. Joseph County associated with the novel H1N1 virus. Preliminary lab reports confirmed the presence of novel H1N1 flu in the St. Joseph County resident at the time of death. While likely due to flu related complications, the exact cause of death is currently under investigation. St. Joseph County Health Officials offer their condolences to the family.

"Any influenza can be serious, but it is important for the public to know that in most cases, the H1N1 flu is causing only mild disease," said Dr. Monroe, Indiana State Health Commissioner. "However, today's news is a grim reminder of the importance of getting the H1N1 flu vaccine out to Hoosiers as soon as possible."

The St. Joseph County Health Department received the first shipment of novel H1N1 nasal spray vaccine and limited amounts have been distributed within our local health care provider networks. Limited quantities are currently available through the Health Department at both the Mishawaka and South Bend locations.

The nasal spray is indicated for use in non-pregnant, healthy people, aged 2-49. Children through 9 years of age should get two doses of vaccine, about a month apart. However, targeted vaccine priority groups are recommended to receive the vaccine first. Target vaccine priority groups include those who are at higher risk of disease or complications, those who are likely to come in contact with novel H1N1, and those who could infect young infants.

The Health Department began offering free H1N1 nasal spray on Thursday, October 8, 2009 to:

- **Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age** because younger infants are at higher risk of influenza-related complications and cannot be vaccinated. Vaccination of those in close contact with infants less than 6 months old might help protect infants by "cocooning" them from the virus.
- **Children from 2 years through 18 years of age** because we have seen many cases of novel H1N1 influenza in children and they are in close contact with each other in school and day care settings, which increases the likelihood of disease spread.

Health Department Locations:

- **South Bend Location:**
9th Floor County-City Building
227 W. Jefferson Blvd.
South Bend, IN 46601
Monday – Friday
8:00-11:45 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.
(574) 245-6656 or (574) 235-9783
- **Mishawaka Location:**
County Services Building
219 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, IN 46544
8:00-12:15 p.m. and 1:30-4:00 p.m.
(574) 256-6223 or (574) 256-6230

Additional vaccine will be available in increasing allotments in the upcoming weeks. The inactivated flu shot vaccine will also be available at later dates. Efforts to vaccinate all residents will occur once there is enough vaccine available for everyone.

St. Joseph County Health officials remind residents to get the seasonal flu vaccine and practice other measures that can help protect against all strains of flu by following the three C's: Clean your hands often, Cover your cough and sneezes, and Contain germs by steering clear of others who are sick and staying home if you are sick. Health officials also encourage other healthy habits such as getting plenty of sleep, eating nutritious foods, and drinking plenty of fluids.

For more information about influenza and the vaccine please visit the Indiana State Department of Health website at www.in.gov/flu. The Department will also be offering a toll-free hotline for the public to call for information on the H1N1 flu and its vaccine at: 1-877-826-0011 or TTY 1-888-561-0044. Residents can call the United Way 211 for specific information on flu vaccine availability in St. Joseph County.

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