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Contact: Christine Decker Stone, (desk) 971-673-1282, (cell) 503-602-8027, Christine.l.stone@state.or.us; Alissa Bateman-Robbins, 503-490-6590

More H1N1 vaccine is arriving; all are eligible to be vaccinated

Weekly H1N1 update for Dec. 15, 2009

As of Monday, December 14, the H1N1 vaccine is available to everyone in Oregon over 6 months of age, and the vaccine supply is steadily increasing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expects to ship another 174,734 doses to Oregon this week, for a cumulative total of 1,066,450. Oregon Public Health officials are reminding people that the vaccine protection doesn't start immediately so it is important to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

"We want people to start the New Year protected against the H1N1 virus and in order to do that, you have to get vaccinated now. It takes 10 to 14 days after vaccination for your body to develop immunity to the flu," says Mel Kohn, M.D., M.P.H., Oregon Public Health director.

With the increased supply, H1N1 vaccine is available at local health care providers and at clinics across the state. Check the flu vaccine locator at www.flu.oregon.gov or by calling the Oregon Public Health Flu Hotline (1-800-978-3040). Nurses are also standing by to answer any medical questions people may have about influenza symptoms and treatments.

Since September 1 in Oregon, 1,278 people have been hospitalized from the flu and 63 have died. Kohn says it's particularly important for people at high risk for complications from the flu to get vaccinated right away.
(more)

“There has been a recent decline in H1N1 flu cases, but people are still getting sick and typically influenza has more than one wave. The more people vaccinated, the better chance we have to prevent the spread of H1N1 into the winter and spring,” says Kohn.

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