

2009 H1N1 FLU

Vaccination Facts for VA Staff

NOVEMBER 6, 2009

FACT #1

All VA staff will be offered the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine, free of charge. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity, when it is available to you, to help protect yourself, your family, and the Veterans we serve.

FACT #2

During the initial period of limited supply, VA has a system that targets who receives the 2009 H1N1 vaccine. This system is built upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance that is designed to ensure that those at higher risk receive the vaccine first.

FACT #3

All VA staff will fall into one of three target groups. The 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine will be given first to staff in the **High** priority groups, then proceed from **Medium** to **Lower** priority groups. Your local VA leaders and/or occupational health office can tell you which priority group you are in.

**See page 2 for priority group list.*

FACT #4

VA staff (for the purpose of 2009 H1N1 flu vaccination) include the following from VHA, VBA, NCA and VA-level offices: paid employees, without compensation (WOC) staff, volunteers, academic affiliates, and some contractors.



FACT #5

2009 H1N1 flu vaccine will also be available at various locations within your community. Contact your local health department or your personal physician's office for details and locations.

FACT #6

In addition to getting vaccinated for 2009 H1N1 flu, you can help prevent the spread of H1N1 flu by keeping your hands clean; keeping hands away from mouth, nose, and eyes; covering your coughs and sneezes; and staying home when sick.

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Priority Groups for 2009 H1N1 Flu Vaccine - VA Staff

HIGH: staff with high exposure or transmission risk

- Staff who are pregnant
- Staff who live with or provide care for infants less than 6 months old
- Staff who provide direct, close (within six feet) patient care on a frequent basis OR have frequent contact with infectious materials.
Examples (not a complete list): ER staff, most nursing staff, physicians, respiratory therapists, certain pharmacists, certain housekeeping staff, door guards, and reception staff.



MEDIUM: staff with medium exposure or transmission risk

- Staff whose contact with patients or infectious materials is usually more than six feet away.
Examples (not a complete list): maintenance staff, certain lab techs, certain volunteers.
- Staff with a chronic health conditions. *Examples (not a complete list): those with asthma, diabetes, heart disease, or suppressed immune systems.*

LOWER: staff with lower exposure or transmission risk

- Staff who have minimal or no job contact with patients or patient areas. *Examples (not a complete list): office workers, security, groundskeepers, and some maintenance workers.*

This information has been summarized from *H1N1 Vaccine Prioritization for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Staff and Patients During Limited Vaccine Supply*. This document can be seen in its entirety at www.publichealth.va.gov. Federal guidance can be seen at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/public/vaccination_qa_pub.htm.