

## **Public Health Update**

### **Influenza Vaccine Availability**

October 13, 2004

The Clark County Health District has cancelled its scheduled flu shot clinics due to a limited supply of flu vaccine. Based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and consultations with local health care and community partners, the health district will be redistributing its limited supply to health care providers who serve patients most at risk for complications or providing shots at locations where these patients are treated. CDC has released a preliminary statement indicating they will have limited supplies of flu vaccine to distribute to the states in the next six to eight weeks.

These patients identified by the health district as most at-risk include:

- Persons with HIV/AIDS
- Persons who have had major organ transplants
- Patients on renal dialysis
- Patients on cancer immunosuppressive therapy
- Persons with chronic respiratory illnesses

Private providers who have supplies of flu vaccine will offer clinics to serve the broader at-risk group as defined by CDC. This group includes:

- People 65 years of age and older
- Children ages 6 months to 23 months
- Adults and children 2 years of age and older with chronic lung or heart disorders including heart disease and asthma
- Pregnant women
- Adults and children 2 years of age and older with chronic metabolic diseases (including diabetes), kidney diseases, blood disorders (such as sickle cell anemia), or weakened immune systems, including persons with HIV/AIDS
- Children and teenagers, 6 months to 18 years of age, who take aspirin daily
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities
- Household members and out-of-home caregivers of infants under the age of 6 months (Children under the age of 6 months cannot be vaccinated.)
- Healthcare workers who provide direct, hands-on care to patients

Persons in these at-risk categories can access flu shot clinic location information at <http://www.maximhealthsystems.com/>.

(more)

People who do not have access to a flu shot are encouraged to follow simple prevention guidelines that are proven methods for curbing the spread of disease:

- **Avoid close contact.**  
Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- **Stay home when you are sick.**  
If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- **Cover your mouth and nose.**  
Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- **Clean your hands.**  
Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**  
Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

The Clark County Health District will continue to provide updated information on the flu season and availability of flu vaccine.

**Members of the public may call (702) 385-INFO (4636) for additional information.**

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