



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



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For more information call 610-344-6252

Chester County Health Department starts seasonal flu shot program Officials stress importance of seasonal flu vaccine in addition to H1N1 (swine) flu vaccine

WEST CHESTER, PA_ The Chester County Health Department announced today the start of its program of influenza and pneumococcal vaccine immunizations. From September 14th, the seasonal flu vaccine will be given at school and community-based sites throughout the County. The public can register for these immunizations by calling 610-344-6252.

Health Department staff remind residents of the importance of getting the seasonal flu vaccine, especially for people who fall into the high risk groups – those who are 50 years of age or older, people with chronic medical conditions, weakened immune or respiratory systems, pregnant women and children and youth from six months through age 19. However, anyone interested in protecting themselves against seasonal influenza is encouraged to get immunized.

This year, County health officials fear that, because of the media attention given to the H1N1 (swine) flu disease, county residents may forego the annual seasonal flu shot, assuming that the H1N1 flu vaccine will cover all potential risks of influenza.

“We cannot stress enough the need to get both the seasonal flu vaccine now, and the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available,” said Margaret Rivello, director of the Chester County Health Department. “Getting a flu shot each year is the single best way to prevent influenza, and this year is no exception.”

Chester County’s yearly flu vaccination program will begin on September 14th and will continue throughout the influenza season, into December, January and beyond. While influenza outbreaks can happen as early as October, influenza activity tends to peak in January or later.

To prevent transmission of influenza to high risk groups, seasonal flu vaccine is also recommended for health care providers, household contacts of high risk people and caregivers of children.

Seasonal influenza is a very contagious illness. Nationally, over 250,000 people are hospitalized each year as a result of contracting seasonal flu, and another 36,000 people die from complications of influenza.

Details of all Chester County seasonal flu clinics are currently being confirmed, and will be posted on the [Chester County Health Department website](#). Information on clinics will also be available by calling the Health Department on 610-344-6252.

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