

# Important Information for People Seeking the H1N1 (swine flu) Vaccine:

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## Who can receive the vaccine at this time?

The Boston Public Health Commission recently announced that **2009 H1N1 vaccine is now available all residents who would like it**, and that earlier restrictions on who could receive a vaccination have been removed. Certain groups are at higher risk of serious illness from the flu and are still strongly recommended for vaccination. Those groups include:

### 1. Pregnant Women

**WHY?** Because pregnant women are at higher risk of complications from the flu. The CDC recently reported that between April and November 2009, many pregnant women have been hospitalized with H1N1 flu and 28 have died. In addition, providing pregnant women vaccination can potentially provide protection to infants who cannot be vaccinated.

### 2. Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age

**WHY?** Because younger infants are at higher risk of flu-related complications and cannot be vaccinated because of their age. Vaccinating those in close contact to infants younger than 6 months of age might provide a zone of protection from the virus for these infants.

### 3. Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel

**WHY?** Because flu illness among healthcare workers and EMS responders can be a potential source of infection to their patients. Vaccination for this group of people can also help protect our health care system by keeping healthcare workers healthy and on the job.

### 4. Young people from 6 months of age through 24 years of age

**WHY?** Because a vast majority of cases of 2009 H1N1 flu have been found among young people in this age group. Thousands of young people have been hospitalized and as of early November 2009, more than 100 have died. This is very different than what is normally seen with "seasonal" flu, or the flu that we see every winter, which primarily affects older adults.

### 5. People aged 25 through 64 who have health conditions that put them at risk for serious complications from the flu.

**WHY?** Because people with serious health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, liver disease, kidney disease, and neurological conditions place them at high risk of getting seriously ill from the flu. A vaccination will help provide protection to this vulnerable group.

**For the latest information on flu in Boston, please visit our web site at [www.bphc.org/flu](http://www.bphc.org/flu), or call the Mayor's Health Line at (617) 534-5050.**