



**Grant County Health District – Always Working for a Healthier and Safer Grant County**

Ephrata Office County Courthouse  
PO Box 37, Ephrata, WA 98823  
509-754-6060

Moses Lake Office  
1038 West Ivy Suite 1, Moses Lake WA 98837  
509-766-7960

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

09/21/2009

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:**

TO: Grant County Media  
Grant County Childcares  
Grant County School Nurses, Public and  
Private Schools  
Health Care Emergencies Alliance

Theresa Fuller, Public Information Officer 509-766-7960 x24

**Grant County Health District Reports Increased Flu Activity  
Influenza A, H1N1 Swine-Origin Virus Present in Grant County**



GRANT COUNTY – According to Grant County public health officials, flu activity in Grant County for the month of September is increasing rapidly. As of September 18, 2009 local healthcare providers have reported 56 positive influenza A test results to the Grant County Health District.

In June, July and August this year, 11 positive new or novel H1N1 cases were identified in Grant County residents. The Washington State Public Health Laboratory is currently only accepting specimens for severe illness cases and pregnant women. “Once the presence of the novel H1N1 virus was established in our community there was no need for additional routine testing,” says Dr. Alexander Brzezny, the Grant County Health Officer. “Our recommendations are the same for seasonal influenza and this new H1N1 virus.” Local clinics can test for Influenza A but that rapid test does not show which type of flu, seasonal or H1N1, the patient has. Additionally, the test can be negative even if a person has the influenza.

Nationally, 99% of all influenza A positive specimens being reported to CDC during the second week of September were identified as novel H1N1. “This statistic tells us most people who are testing positive right now for influenza A have the novel H1N1 strain,” states Dr. Brzezny.

Symptoms of influenza include fever (100 degrees F or greater), and cough or sore throat. Other symptoms may include shortness of breath, muscle aches, headache, extreme tiredness, and sometimes nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.

Individuals who become ill with influenza are considered infectious and should stay home until they have been without fever for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications. Those who are at high risk of influenza complications, including those with chronic health conditions, should contact their healthcare provider. A person with symptoms of influenza or cough coming to their doctor’s office should wear a face mask.

Grant County Health District is working with school district administrators to plan for school-based immunization clinics when the H1N1 vaccine arrives in October. “We’re also contacting healthcare providers to plan for their allocation of the H1N1 vaccine,” says Peggy Grigg, Grant County Health District Administrator.

**Who will get the novel H1N1 vaccine first:**

CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), a panel made up of medical and public health experts, met July 29, 2009, to make recommendations on who should receive the new novel H1N1 vaccine first.

- ☑ **Pregnant women** because they are at higher risk of complications, and a *vaccinated* mother will be less likely to infect her newborn.
- ☑ **Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months** of age because infants are at higher risk of flu-related complications and cannot be vaccinated.
- ☑ **Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel** because infected healthcare workers can infect patients.
- ☑ **All people from 6 months through 24 years of age**; those under 5 are at *highest risk*.
  - **Children from 6 months through 18 years of age.** There have been many cases of novel H1N1 influenza in children; they are in close contact with each other in school and child care settings.
  - **Young adults 19 through 24 years of age.** There have been many cases of novel H1N1 influenza in these healthy young adults; they often live, work, and study in close proximity and they are a frequently mobile population.
- ☑ **Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions** associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

Besides getting your flu vaccine, you can take the following actions to stop the spread of the flu and other illnesses:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Use tissues and throw them away after each use.
- Wash your hands often; if using hand sanitizers in between hand-washing, pay attention to cleaning your fingertips.
- Stay home if you are ill. Don’t go to work.
- Keep 6 feet between yourself and people who appear to be sick.
- Children should not attend child care or school if they are ill.

***Remember last year's seasonal flu  
shot will not protect you this year.***

Download flu related educational materials from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at:  
[www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/patiented.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/patiented.htm)

# # #