

NEWS RELEASE



El Dorado County **HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Neda West, Director / Olivia C. Kasirye, MD, MS, Public Health Officer
931 Spring Street, Placerville, CA 95667 • (530) 621-6156/ FAX (530) 626-4713

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CONTACT:
Margaret Williams
(530) 621-6243
www.edcgov.us

Update on H1N1 (Swine) Flu in El Dorado County ***Vaccine will become more broadly available over the next several weeks***

El Dorado County health officials are monitoring H1N1 (swine) flu activity in the County and continue to recommend that good hand washing and staying home when sick are the best ways to prevent the spread of the virus. In addition, health officials expect to see shipments of H1N1 flu vaccine begin to arrive in El Dorado County over the next several weeks, with a broadening availability for people who would like to receive the vaccine.

“Our county will receive the vaccine in several shipments,” said El Dorado County Health Officer, Dr. Olivia Kasirye. “For people who are anxious to get the vaccine, we ask that they be patient. We believe that eventually everyone who would like to get the vaccine will be able to receive it.” The H1N1 flu vaccine is manufactured using the same methods as those used for the seasonal flu vaccine.

According to Dr. Kasirye, the first round of H1N1 flu vaccine is expected to arrive in El Dorado County this week and will be directly shipped to doctors’ offices that have requested it. “It will be a small amount (approximately 1,500 doses) of FluMist, and targeted for healthy children ages 2-9 and caregivers of children under six months of age,” said Dr. Kasirye. “Other shipments of H1N1 vaccine are expected in the coming weeks.” In addition to local healthcare providers, the Health Services Department also expects to receive some vaccine and will serve as a safety net for the community.

“If you would like the H1N1 flu vaccine for yourself or your child, we suggest that you first check with your healthcare provider to see if they have the vaccine (or expect to receive it in the near future) and whether the vaccine is advised for you,” said Dr. Kasirye. “In the mean time, it is also highly recommended that everyone receive their regular, seasonal flu vaccine, which is widely available throughout the community.”

Symptoms of H1N1 (swine) flu are similar to seasonal flu, and include fever of 100 degrees or higher, with cough. People with flu symptoms should stay home from work or school until their fever has been gone for at least 24 hours. Individuals with severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing or dehydration from vomiting and/or diarrhea, should seek medical advice. Pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions (such as a respiratory condition, immune disorder, or diabetes) should seek early medical care if they get the flu.

To date, there have been 52 confirmed cases of H1N1 infection in El Dorado County, although it is believed that more cases are circulating in the community. There has been one H1N1 related death in El Dorado County. Updated local information on H1N1 (swine) flu will regularly be posted online at www.edcgov.us/publichealth.

Everyday Actions to Stay Healthy:

- Get your seasonal flu vaccine. The Health Services Department will host a drive-thru flu shot clinic (with seasonal flu vaccine) on Oct. 14 from 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. at the El Dorado County Fairgrounds. Additional flu shot clinic dates can be found at (530) 621-6188.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective if soap and water aren't available.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- If you get sick with the flu, stay home from work or school until your fever is gone for at least 24 hours (without use of fever reducing medications). Limit contact with others to keep from infecting them, and cover your cough.