



Influenza Watch

Los Angeles County

<http://lapublichealth.org/acd/flu.htm>

2007 ACIP Recommendations for the Control and Prevention of Influenza

Principal updates and changes include:

- **ALL** persons, including school aged children, who want to reduce risk of becoming ill or transmitting influenza to others should be vaccinated
- Children aged 6 months to 8 years should receive 2 doses if not previously vaccinated
- If children aged 6 months to 8 years received only one dose in their first year of vaccination, they should receive 2 doses the following year
- Providers should offer vaccination and hold immunization clinics **THROUGHOUT** the influenza season (through May)
- Healthcare facilities should consider vaccination coverage among workers a measure of patient safety and should implement policies to encourage vaccination.

In California, hospitals are now required by law to offer free vaccine to employees. Employees must get vaccinated annually or sign a waiver of declination.

www.dhs.ca.gov/dccdc/izgroup/shared/hospital_influenza_law.htm

The influenza season is approaching – now is the time to vaccinate!

2006-2007 Influenza Summary and 2007-2008 Season Outlook

Los Angeles County experienced a mild influenza season during 2006-2007. Of reported cases, the majority had influenza type A (91%), consistent with state and national reports. In total, 24 cases of severe pediatric influenza were reported, including one death. Many of these pediatric cases occurred in unvaccinated children with pre-existing conditions. Influenza activity peaked later in the season, at the end of January and beginning of February.

Over the summer, countries in the southern hemisphere experienced a moderate influenza season. Of note, six pediatric influenza deaths with bacterial superinfection were reported in Australia. However, because influenza is unpredictable, activity in other regions of the world is not necessarily indicative of what we will experience in the upcoming season. The good news is that the FDA recently approved a sixth vaccine manufacturer and a record **132 million doses** of influenza vaccine is estimated for the 2007-2008 season.

In the News

Effectiveness of Influenza Vaccine in the Community-Dwelling Elderly

During 10 seasons, influenza vaccination was associated with significant reductions in the risk of hospitalization for pneumonia or influenza (27% reduction) and in the risk of death (48% reduction) among community-dwelling elderly persons. Vaccine delivery to this high-priority group should be improved (NEJM, v. 357 no.14). Available for free at:

<http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/357/14/1373>

FDA approves FluMist in children aged 2-5yrs

The FDA's approval of FluMist for children aged 2 through 4 years makes a needle-free influenza vaccine available for small children in the United States for the first time. The vaccine was previously limited to healthy children 5 years of age and older and to adults up to age 49. For more information visit:

<http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2007/NEW01705.html>

Participate in the California Influenza Sentinel Provider Program

Sentinel providers report the total number of patient visits each week and number of patient visits for influenza-like illness by age group. Most providers report that it takes them less than 30 minutes a week to compile and report their data. In addition, sentinel providers can submit specimens from a subset of patients for virus isolation free of charge.

For more information visit:

www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dccdc/VRDL/html/FLU/Flu-sentinel.htm

Contact: Melissa Dahlke at flu@dhs.ca.gov or 510-620-3494

Order FREE health education materials

In an effort to promote healthy practices, free materials are available to distribute to clinics, hospitals, schools, and organizations that wish to be proactive in promoting healthier practices.

<http://lapublichealth.org/acd/HealthEd.htm>

