



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Pike County General Health District

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Dear Parent or Guardian:

As you may have heard, a new influenza virus, called the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus, was first identified in the United States in late April 2009. The virus has caused illness ranging from mild to severe, including hospitalizations and deaths in adults and children. Many children have gotten 2009 H1N1 infections and there have been large outbreaks in some schools across the country. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has recommended that children and young adults 6 months through 24 years be vaccinated against 2009 H1N1 as soon as the vaccine is available. Other groups recommended to receive the first doses of 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine are:

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- Health care and emergency medical services workers, and
- People ages 25 through 64 years who have certain health conditions such as HIV, diabetes, or heart or lung disease.

Vaccination is the best way to protect your child from this potentially serious disease. The Pike County General Health District has worked with school administrators to provide the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine to your children during a clinic at school. Your child's school will let you know the specific dates of the clinic. Children under ten years of age will need two doses of vaccine spaced about one month apart. There will be no cost to you for this vaccine.

The vaccine consent form includes options allowing you to either accept or refuse the vaccination for your child. If you refuse, the vaccination will not be given to your child. You must return the consent form immediately to ensure that your child will receive the vaccination. Your child will not be allowed to receive a vaccination without a signed consent form.

In the meantime, please remember that the best way to prevent H1N1 Influenza is to practice good health habits:

- wash your hands with warm water and soap (or utilize alcohol-based hand sanitizer)
- cover your coughs and sneezes
- remain home while you are sick until you have been free of a fever for twenty-four hours without the aid of fever-reducing medications
- avoid close contact with other individuals
- avoid touching your mouth, nose, or eyes
- practice other good health habits like getting plenty of rest, eating nutritious food, managing your stress, drinking plenty of fluids, and getting regular exercise

If you have any questions, you may visit our website www.pike-health.org. We will post clinic dates and times for each school on the website, as well as additional information about H1N1 Influenza. You may also contact the Pike County General Health District by emailing: sanderson@pike-health.org or by phone at (740)947-7721.

Wishing You Good Health,

Wally Burden

Health Commissioner