



2009 H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu) Frequently Asked Questions about the H1N1 Vaccine (Shot)

Will the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine (shot) be safe?

We expect the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine to be just as safe as the regular seasonal flu vaccine, which has a very good safety record. Over the years, hundreds of millions of Americans have received seasonal flu vaccines.

Are there any side effects to the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine?

We expect that any side effects of the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine will be rare. If they do occur, it is expected that they will be similar to those of the seasonal flu vaccine and may include soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given, fainting (mainly in adolescents), headache, muscle aches, fever, and nausea.

Life-threatening allergic reactions to vaccines are very rare. If any unusual condition occurs following vaccination, seek medical attention right away.

Are there some people who should not receive this vaccine?

People who have a life-threatening allergy to chicken eggs or to any other substance in the vaccine should not be vaccinated.

How will the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccines be monitored for safety?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will be closely watching for any signs that the 2009 H1N1 vaccine is causing unexpected negative side effects and will work with state and local health officials to investigate any unusual events.

Will the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccines that are currently recommended contain adjuvants?

No. According to current federal plans, none of the 2009 seasonal flu vaccines or H1N1 flu vaccines administered in the U.S will contain adjuvants.

Will the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine contain thimerosal?

The 2009 H1N1 flu vaccines that FDA is approving will come in several forms. Some will come in multi-dose vials and will contain thimerosal as a preservative to prevent potential contamination after the vial is opened. Some will be available in single-dose units, or be administered through the nose, which will not include thimerosal.

Is thimerosal safe when used as a preservative in vaccines?

The CDC makes vaccine safety a priority and is aware that the presence of thimerosal in vaccines and suggestions of a relationship to autism has raised concerns. Numerous studies have found no association between thimerosal exposure and autism. Since 2001, no new vaccine approved by FDA for use in children has thimerosal as a preservative and all vaccines routinely recommended by CDC

for children under six years of age have been thimerosal-free, or contain only trace amounts, except for some types of influenza vaccine.

Will there be a possibility of Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) cases following the 2009 H1N1 vaccine?

Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) is a rare disease in which the body damages its own nerve cells, causing muscle weakness and sometimes paralysis. Infection with a type of bacteria (*Campylobacter jejuni*) is one of the most common risk factors for GBS. People can also develop GBS after having the flu or other infections (such as cytomegalovirus and Epstein Barr virus). Very rarely they may develop GBS in the days or weeks after receiving a vaccination.

Numerous studies have been done to evaluate whether or not flu vaccines are associated with GBS. In most studies, no association was found between GBS and the seasonal flu vaccine, but 2 studies suggested that about 1 additional person out of 1 million vaccinated people may be at risk for GBS associated with the seasonal flu vaccine. The CDC and FDA will be closely monitoring reports of serious problems following the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccines, including GBS.

Will the benefits of the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccines outweigh the risks?

Vaccination is the best way to prevent flu infection and its complications. We expect the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine to work very well to prevent infection with the H1N1 flu virus. The CDC and FDA believe that the benefits of vaccination with the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine far outweigh the risks, which is why so much work is being done to have the H1N1 flu vaccine available this fall.

Right now the 2009 H1N1 flu virus seems to be causing serious health outcomes for:

1. Healthy young people from birth through age 24
2. Pregnant women
3. Adults 25 to 64 who have underlying medical conditions

Is this something I should talk to my healthcare provider about?

We encourage you to ask your healthcare provider any questions you may have about the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccines that will be available during the 2009-2010 flu season. Your healthcare provider is an excellent source for information on the benefits and risks of vaccination for protection against 2009 H1N1 influenza for you, your children, and other family members.

What is the best source of information for 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine safety?

In addition to talking openly with your healthcare providers, stay informed by checking the following Web sites often for the most up-to-date news and information: www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu and www.flu.gov.

For the latest information check the **Napa County Public Health** website at: <http://www.co.napa.ca.us/publichealth>, the **CDC website** at <http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu> or call the automated **Napa County Public Health** hotline at (707) 253-4540.