



# Polk County Health Department



**Public Health**  
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## **Novel H1N1 Influenza Hits Polk County**

**Polk County-** The Polk County Health Department reports that there are cases of Novel H1N1 influenza circulating in Polk County. Overall, influenza-like illness activity in Wisconsin is higher than normal and widespread cases of H1N1 have been identified statewide and throughout the country. With schools now open, it is expected that influenza-like illnesses will increase.

“As of August 30<sup>th</sup>, Polk County has reported 14 cases of Novel H1N1 Influenza,” said Gretchen Sampson, Polk County Health Officer. “Now more than ever, people are encouraged to follow good hygiene precautions such as hand washing, covering their cough/sneeze with their sleeve or a tissue, and staying home when ill.”

## **H1N1 Vaccine Update**

The H1N1 vaccine has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the CDC is indicating the vaccine is safe and effective. It is expected providers in Wisconsin will receive initial shipments by the first week of October with millions more doses being shipped weekly after that. As the Novel H1N1 vaccine becomes available, people are encouraged to become immunized. The CDC anticipates there will be enough H1N1 vaccine for anyone who wants it, although they are using a phased-in approach for distribution with the first wave of vaccine going to pregnant women, health care workers and emergency first responders.

## **Seasonal Influenza Update**

Seasonal influenza activity is expected to increase later this fall. At this time, 99% of current confirmed laboratory cases of influenza in Wisconsin have been identified as Novel H1N1. The CDC indicates there is plenty of seasonal influenza vaccine available, although several Polk County Health Care providers are currently running low and are postponing flu shot clinics until further shipments arrive.

“Manufacturers of the seasonal vaccine are currently doing double duty in producing and shipping both the Seasonal and the Novel H1N1 vaccine. Although the Health Department, St. Croix Regional Medical Center and the Osceola Medical Center are running low on the seasonal vaccine, there is no need to panic. Everyone who wants a seasonal vaccine will be able to get one as shipments continue to come in” said Sampson.

Residents are encouraged to visit [www.polkcountyflu.com](http://www.polkcountyflu.com) often to check for updated information on flu shot clinics and other influenza related issues.