



# IREDELL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## **Iredell County Health Department observes National Flu Vaccination Week**

The Iredell County Health Department encourages you to fight the flu by following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended three step approach: vaccination, everyday preventive actions and the correct use of antiviral medications.

The 2009 H1N1 flu is expected to be the most common flu virus this season. A separate vaccine has been made to protect against 2009 H1N1 flu since this new virus was detected after production of the seasonal flu vaccine had already begun. The H1N1 flu vaccine is produced in the same way as seasonal flu vaccine. The CDC and Iredell County Health Department recommend that persons six months and older receive both the seasonal flu vaccine and the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine.

The Iredell County Health Department is currently taking appointments for the 2009 H1N1 vaccine. You can call 704-878-5330 ext. 5331 or 704-871-3454 to schedule an appointment. A walk-in clinic will be held for the 2009 H1N1 vaccine and Seasonal Flu vaccine on January 14 from 10am-7pm at the Iredell County Health Department at 318 Turnersburg Highway Statesville. The health department has a limited supply of seasonal flu vaccine. There is no charge for the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine or the seasonal flu vaccine at the Health Department.

“People who do not get vaccinated are taking two risks: they are placing themselves at risk for the flu, including potentially long and serious illness, and second, if they get sick, they are also placing their close contacts at risk for influenza,” says Dr. Anne Schuchat, Assistant Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service and CDC’s Director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. “Flu can be especially serious for babies, young children, pregnant women, and people with certain chronic medical conditions, and seniors, who are at high risk of flu-related complications of death. Influenza is not a disease to be taken lightly.”

While adults only need one dose of the 2009 H1N1 vaccine, children less than 10 years of age will need two doses of the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine to be fully protected.

You can get vaccinated with either a flu shot (for people six months and older) or a nasal spray vaccine (healthy people 2 years through 49 years of age who are not pregnant). The nasal spray vaccine is a good option for those who may have a fear of needles. Flu vaccines are very safe and closely monitored for any potential side effects.

It's important to realize that influenza vaccine cannot give you the flu. Why? Because the injected flu shot contains inactivated (killed) viruses, and the nasal spray contains attenuated (weakened) viruses and cannot cause flu illness. If you get the flu soon after taking the flu vaccine, it means that you may have been exposed to the flu virus shortly before getting vaccinated or during the two week period it takes the body to gain protection after getting vaccinated, or you are sick with a non-flu respiratory virus that has similar symptoms of the flu.

Both 2009 H1N1 flu and seasonal flu viruses are thought to spread mostly from person to person through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with flu. You can also get sick by touching something with flu virus on it and then touching your eyes, mouth or nose. Make sure to cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and wash your hands often with soap and water. It is also smart to avoid close contact with people who are sick.

For people who are very sick from flu and are hospitalized or people who are sick with flu symptoms and are at increased risk for serious flu complications, antiviral drugs are available. Antiviral medications can help make illness milder and shorten the duration of illness. For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.

Call 704-878-5300 ext 5331 or 704-871-3454 to make your 2009 H1N1 vaccine appointment today. No time for an appointment? Stop by the Iredell County Health Department walk in 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine clinic on January 14<sup>th</sup> from 10am-7pm. For more information, visit [www.flu.nc.gov](http://www.flu.nc.gov)

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