

NYS Dept. of Health Flu Info

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is urging New Yorkers to get their flu shot. "According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) there will be plentiful supplies of flu vaccine over the course of the 2007-08 flu season. It is anticipated that approximately 140 million doses of vaccine will be available this year, more than has ever been distributed in the U.S. during a single influenza season."

"This year's influenza vaccine contains antigens to the three strains of flu virus that experts expect will most likely be circulating during the 2007-08 flu season: A/Wisconsin, A/Solomon Islands, and B/Malaysia, or their equivalents. It's important to get a flu shot annually since viruses that cause flu often change from year to

Shots can be obtained by private health provider and through the many Flu clinics held throughout Monroe County. For more info:

Those at higher risk for flu include:

- Persons 50 years of age and older, with or without chronic health conditions;
- Children aged 6 months up to their 5th birthday;
- Residents of long-term care facilities;
- Adults and children with chronic health conditions;
- Pregnant women;
- Health care personnel;
- Household contacts and caregivers of children under 5 years of age and adults 50 years of age and older;
- Household contacts and caregivers to persons with medical conditions that put them at higher risk for severe complications from influenza; and
- All persons, including school-aged children, who want to reduce the risk of becoming ill with influenza or of transmitting influenza to others.

People at high risk of medical complications should also receive pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPV) which protects against 23 types of pneumococcal bacteria, commonly known as pneumonia. One dose of PPV usually will provide lifetime immunity to persons over 65 years of age.

Influenza is a serious disease that contributes to 36,000 deaths, on average, each year and more than 200,000 annual hospitalizations. Symptoms of influenza resemble those of a cold, but come on much more swiftly and are more pronounced. A person who has the flu usually has a fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, chills, a severe headache and muscle aches as well as a cough or sore throat.

Individuals who know that they have been exposed to someone with influenza, or who are experiencing symptoms of flu, should consult with their health care provider immediately to determine if antiviral drugs may be helpful.

Treatment with antiviral medications can sometimes make the course of illness less severe, if treatment is started within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms. Antibiotics are not effective against influenza.

Please visit the department of Health Web site for more information about the flu at <http://www.nyhealth.gov>.