

FLU MESSAGES
2011-12
Updated July 18, 2011

- Every flu season is different, and influenza can affect people differently. Even healthy children and adults can get very sick from the flu and spread it to others.
- **Everyone aged 6 months and older should receive an annual influenza vaccination.**
- Getting an annual influenza vaccination will protect you and those you care about from the flu.
- A seasonal flu vaccination is especially recommended for people with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women, people living or caring for babies six months and younger or people who are unable to be vaccinated because of health reasons, and all health care workers.
- 2011-12 seasonal flu vaccines consist of three likely influenza strains: H1N1, H3N2 and Influenza B. These are the same strains that last year's seasonal flu shot protected against. Because immunity declines over the course of a year (especially for the elderly), **people who received a seasonal flu immunization last year should get another one this year.**
- It's generally rare for the same three influenza virus strains to be chosen for the flu vaccine from one season to the next, but this has happened before.
- Since 1969, the viruses selected for inclusion in the flu vaccine have remained the same eight times (including the 2011-2012 season). Each time, CDC has stressed the importance of getting vaccinated each season.
- People should get their flu shot as soon as it becomes available. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against influenza. Flu season begins as early as October and is unpredictable. Immunity will last through the season.
- The CDC says that even though the World Health Organization declared the H1N1 pandemic officially over in August 2010, the H1N1 virus will likely continue to spread for years to come, like a regular seasonal influenza virus.
- Seasonal flu vaccine, which is manufactured by strict federal standards and thoroughly tested before it is offered to the public, will likely arrive in Oregon in August and will continue through the end of the year.
- Some children up to age 9 may need two doses of seasonal flu to provide the best protection. Parents should check with their health care provider.
- Prevention is a crucial part of staying healthy during flu season.
 - Cover your cough
 - Wash your hands
 - Stay home when you're sick
 - Get vaccinated
- Flu vaccine is available from health care providers, local health departments and many pharmacies (for people 11 and older). To locate a flu shot near you, visit www.flu.oregon.gov or call the Oregon Flu Hotline at 1-800-978-3040