

H1N1 Flu vs. Seasonal Flu — What You Need to Know

SEASONAL FLU

Don't wait ... vaccinate

If I get a seasonal flu shot early, will it still work through the entire flu season?

YES. Regardless of how early you receive your seasonal flu vaccination, you will have protection from seasonal flu for the duration of the flu season. Vaccination can begin as soon as vaccine is available, in late August or September. The goal is for people — especially those at high risk of developing complications from influenza — to receive a seasonal flu vaccination *before* influenza activity is taking place in the community. Currently, there is ongoing influenza activity in both Missouri and Kansas, so the sooner you receive a seasonal flu vaccination, the better.

Will the seasonal flu vaccination protect me from H1N1 Influenza?

NO. Because the H1N1 Influenza A strain of flu has never been seen before, the seasonal flu vaccination will not provide protection against it. You will need to obtain a separate vaccination for H1N1 in order to be fully protected this flu season.

H1N1 FLU

Is this vaccine for you?

The new H1N1 influenza vaccine should be available beginning in mid-October. Eventually everyone should get vaccinated, but initially the vaccine will be made available to individuals in the following priority groups. These groups were identified by the federal government based on who is most at risk for severe illness from the H1N1 virus:

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers of infants younger than six months of age
- All children and young adults ages six months through 24 years
- Health care personnel
- People aged 25 to 64 years with high-risk medical conditions

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Reducing the spread of flu

As with any influenza virus, you can help reduce the spread of H1N1 and seasonal flu by taking the following steps:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to get rid of most germs. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick to avoid spreading illness to co-workers and friends.
- Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water, and getting adequate rest and exercise.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and properly dispose of used tissues.

Learn more at [PrepareMetro !\[\]\(4f6bf54ae7e4144a72d78316053e412d_img.jpg\) .org](http://PrepareMetroKC.org)