

H1N1 Nasal Vaccine Safety



Who can get the nasal spray?

- The spray is recommended for use in healthy people 2-49 years of age who are not pregnant.
- Seasonal nasal spray vaccine has been used safely in these groups since 2003.

Who should not use nasal spray?

- Children younger than 2 years of age;
- Pregnant women;
- People 50 years of age and older;
- People with chronic health problems such as heart or lung disease, asthma, diabetes, kidney failure, or weakened immune systems;
- Children younger than 5 years old who have had recurrent wheezing;
- Children or adolescents receiving aspirin therapy;
- People who have had Guillain-Barre syndrome, a rare nervous system disorder;
- People who have a severe allergy to chicken, eggs, or any other components in the spray;
- Anyone in close contact with a person with a severely weakened immune system.

Is the nasal spray effective?

- Both the shot and the nasal spray should be equally effective against 2009 H1N1 flu.
- Some reports have indicated the nasal spray works well because it starts in the nose where flu infection normally begins.
- Since there is no natural immunity to the new 2009 H1N1 virus, either type of vaccine will provide some protection.

Since the spray contains live viruses, can't it cause the flu?

- The nasal spray does contain live viruses, however the viruses are weakened (attenuated).
- The weakened viruses cannot grow at normal body temperature and cannot cause the flu.
- The weakened viruses do not change into typical flu viruses that can be passed on to others.

Can pregnant women be around someone who's had nasal spray?

- The nasal spray is not recommended for pregnant women themselves due to a lack of studies in that group of people.
- There is no risk to pregnant women who are in close contact with someone receiving the nasal spray.

What about new or breastfeeding mothers?

- Both new and breastfeeding mothers can get the nasal spray anytime after their babies are born.
- When new parents are vaccinated, it helps protect their babies because infants less than 6 months old cannot get flu vaccine.

What about health care workers?

- Nasal spray vaccine can be safely given to health care personnel who are healthy, younger than 50 years old, and not pregnant.
- Anyone who works with patients needing special care due to severe immune suppression should not get nasal vaccine.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used as a substitute for talking with a health care provider. If you have any questions about influenza, please talk with your provider.

More information may also be found at:

www.cdc.gov and www.dhd10.org

District Health Department #10

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