

Subject: DPHHS HAN ADVISORY 2010-3: DPHHS has sent a release supporting National Influenza Vaccination Week.

[State of Montana](#) [DPHHS HAN ADVISORY](#)

Forwarding Instructions:

FORWARD to your local HAN contacts

DPHHS Information / Recommendations:

DPHHS has sent a release supporting National Influenza Vaccination Week.

NEWS FROM THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

For immediate release

January 13, 2010

Contact: Lisa Underwood, Immunization Section, DPHHS, 406-444- 0065

Jon Ebelt, Public Information Officer, DPHHS, 406-444-0936

Montana Joins National Influenza Vaccination Week

Today the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services announced its participation in National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) January 10-16, 2010.

NIVW was established to highlight the importance of continuing influenza vaccination, as well as fostering greater use of flu vaccine after the holiday season.

Since 2009 H1N1 disease is likely to continue, NIVW is an important opportunity to maintain or increase the number of people who get the 2009 H1N1 vaccine at a time when demand for vaccine usually drops significantly.

Though this has been an unprecedented year in terms of the number of people who have received seasonal influenza vaccinations, most people in the United States still have not gotten the 2009 H1N1 vaccine.

"Plenty of opportunities still remain for getting the 2009 H1N1 vaccine in Montana," said DPHHS Director Anna Whiting Sorrell. "Influenza is unpredictable and we do not know the likelihood of a future wave of 2009 H1N1 influenza, but vaccination is the single best way to reduce the health impact of influenza."

Besides being accessible at local and tribal health departments, the 2009 H1N1 vaccine is now offered in some pharmacies throughout Montana. Pharmacy chains participating in Montana include Safeway, Osco, and Walgreens. Information about local availability of the vaccine can be found on the DPHHS website at www.dphhs.mt.gov/influenza or by calling the statewide information number at 1-877-701-8555.

One of the many goals for the NIVW campaign is to engage at-risk audiences who are not yet vaccinated, hesitant about vaccination, or unsure about where to get vaccinated. People with high risk conditions, ages 25 through 64 years of age have been hit especially hard by 2009 H1N1. A large majority of serious infections and deaths have occurred in this group. "It's important that people who fall within this high risk group, or those with a high risk condition listed above, get vaccinated this year," Whiting Sorrell said.

Older Americans are now recommended to receive the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine. While older people are thought to be less likely to be infected with the 2009 H1N1 virus compared to younger persons, there have been severe infections and deaths from 2009 H1N1 in every age group, including people 65 and older. Friday, January 15, has been designated Seniors' Vaccination Day, a reminder that older Americans should now seek 2009 H1N1 vaccine.

For more information about influenza visit www.dphhs.mt.gov/influenza or for local information call 1-877-701-8555.

DPHHS Subject Matter Expert (SME) Contact:

DPHHS PHEP (406) 444-0919

**Distributed by the Department of Public Health and Human Services
Health Alert Network (HAN) System**

DPHHS Health Alert Hotline: 1-800-701-5769

DPHHS HAN Website: www.han.mt.gov

You have received this message based upon the information contained within our emergency notification data base. If you have a different e-mail or fax address that you would like us to use please notify us as soon as possible by e-mail at hhshan@mt.gov.

The goal of Montana's Health Alert Network is to transmit information to local public health authorities as quickly as possible, and assign a suitable priority to the message. For questions or comments about Montana's HAN system you may contact the DPHHS HAN Coordinator, Gerry Wheat at gwheat@mt.gov.

Categories of Health Alert Messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.