

Flu vaccine update - NOVEMBER 1, 2009

All three offices now have the **"seasonal" flu vaccines**.

This includes the **FluMist** (intranasal vaccine) which is given to children 2 years and over. It will not be given to those children who currently have problems such as asthma or wheezing, but a history of asthma in the past or a family history of asthma does not disqualify your child.

We also have a limited supply of the ".25 ("point 25) **injectable** for children less than three years of age and a limited supply of the ".5 ("point 5)" injectable for children three years and older.

Children 8 years and under will require a second dose of the injectable or the nasal vaccine if they have not received two doses in the past.

We have a *very, very* limited supply of the VFC (Vaccines for Children) in both injectable doses for Medicaid (and Medipass) patients. This is only available to Medicaid patients at no cost. Those "self-pay" patients who would normally receive VFC vaccines will be charged the following for the "seasonal" flu vaccine:

\$30 for Injectable

\$35 for FluMist

If your child has received the first dose of FluMist through the public elementary schools, we are able to administer the second dose one month or more later. You must also wait a month to receive the H1N1 nasal version when and if this becomes available.

Your child can receive any of the vaccines:

- 1) at the time of your well-child check-up,
- 2) at a *nurse visit* which must be scheduled in advance

These are at various times of the day including evenings, at all three offices and on Saturday mornings at the Haverhill and Lantana offices only.

- 3) siblings and parents can also receive the vaccines if they are available. Parents will only be offered the FluMist version because of our limited supply of the injectable.

As of November 1, we have a small supply of all forms of the H1N1 vaccines at all three offices. This includes:

- 1) The FluMist (nasal) version which is for children two years and up. It is not for children who have had any wheezing, coughing or recent problems associated with asthma.
- 2) Both injectable forms for children under 3 years of age and for children 3 years and up in the single-dose, thimerosal-free vials.
- 3) A small supply of the older children and adult form in the multi-dose vials which do contain the preservative.

There is a priority list of patients who will receive the H1N1 vaccine. Please call for details while the vaccine is in short supply.

Slightly different rules apply as to which children require a second dose of the H1N1 vaccine:

9 and under, 2 doses at least one month apart

10 and over, one dose

And the nasal version will be available only for children 2 years and older

Those children who have been told that they have had the H1N1 flu in the past four months should still be given the H1N1 vaccines unless your child has had specific viral culture proof that the illness was positive for H1N1. In most cases that have been seen, we have not been doing the specific H1N1 viral culture. In some cases, we have done the rapid test for Influenza A and B and assumed that it was the H1N1 virus if the test was positive for Influenza A.

We will not be administering any "seasonal" injectable flu vaccine from multi-dose vials, so none will contain thimerosal.

Please bear with us while we suffer through this vaccine situation. It is not under our control and we are often in the dark just the same as you are as far as knowing when the vaccines will be available. Your patience is appreciated.

Check back with this website on a daily basis for updates.