



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
LANSING

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Dear Obstetrical Health Care Provider:

The influenza season is upon us, placing pregnant women and their newborns at risk for influenza complications caused by the seasonal and influenza A (H1N1) 2009 viruses. There are challenges and opportunities in keeping pregnant women protected against these viruses. We encourage you to consider the following points:

- Hospitalization rates for seasonal influenza among pregnant women are 4 times greater in the second or third trimester than in non-pregnant women.
- In one case series, the incidence of hospitalization for confirmed novel influenza A (H1N1) 2009 virus infection among pregnant women was 4 times that of the general population.
- Deaths caused by novel influenza A (H1N1) 2009 have been reported among pregnant women.
- Only 24% of women who were pregnant during the 2007-08 seasonal influenza season received a flu vaccine.
- Vaccines against novel influenza A (H1N1) virus infection are being produced using methods similar to those used for seasonal influenza vaccine.
- Licensure of vaccines against novel influenza A (H1N1) 2009 (FDA approved September 15, 2009) were based on the same licensure standards used for seasonal influenza vaccines, as it is done routinely each year when strains are changed in the seasonal vaccine.
- The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has recommended seasonal influenza vaccine for all women who are or will be pregnant during the influenza season and have placed pregnant women in the initial target group to receive influenza A (H1N1) 2009 vaccine as soon as it is available.
- Pregnant women rely on obstetricians as their primary health care provider. Your recommendation (and administration) of these vaccines will increase use among your patients. Information from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) can be found at:
http://www.acog.org/departments/dept_notice.cfm?recno=20&bulletin=4941
- Be prepared to offer antiviral medications to pregnant women who have influenza-like illness. CDC's updated interim guidelines for use of antiviral medications (9/17/09) are posted at http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/pregnancy/antiviral_messages.htm.

Consider providing both seasonal and influenza A (H1N1) 2009 vaccines within your clinical site. For information on how to become an H1N1 vaccine provider, contact your local health department today. For updated information on seasonal and H1N1 vaccines, please visit www.michigan.gov/flu or www.cdc.gov/flu.

Sincerely,

Greg Holzman, MD, MPH