EGG ALLERGIES
On December 6, Red Book Online published an egg allergy and influenza vaccine update which stated that there no longer is a need to withhold influenza vaccine due to presumed IgE-mediated sensitivity to egg. The update stated that based on recommendations from the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, skin testing is no longer necessary. However, these recommendations are not appropriate for the egg allergic person with a history of anaphylaxis or severe allergy.

CODING FOR VACCINE ADMINISTRATION
Related news article: Revised coding for flu vaccinations may complicate immunization process

UNIVERSAL INFLUENZA VACCINE
According to a commentary in Nature Medicine, leading experts at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) stated that "the goal of a universal cross-protective influenza vaccine is feasible." Like the immune system itself, existing vaccines target the head of the flu virus's hemagglutinin (HA) protein, which often mutates, requiring reformulation of the flu vaccine each year, they note. They discuss the possibility of developing vaccines that target a much more stable region on the stem of HA flu virus's hemagglutinin protein.

The current edition of the Journal of Public Health Management and Practice published multiple influenza related articles:
- Editorial: "One More Lesson From the Pandemic"
- "A Process Evaluation of an Active Surveillance System for Hospitalized 2009-2010 H1N1 Influenza Cases." This article highlights the value of sentinel surveillance methodology and discusses challenges of rapidly deploying a new active surveillance system for an emergent disease.
- "Two Distinct Surveillance Methods to Track Hospitalized Influenza Patients in New York State During the 2009-2010 Influenza Season." This article discusses the existing Emerging Infections Program surveillance and a newly established sentinel hospital surveillance program.
- Additional articles can be found here.

NEWS ARTICLES
- Sebelius: Everyone needs the flu vaccine
  "One of the best gifts you can give your family and friends during the holiday season is getting your flu shot."

- Are Your Abuelos Vaccinated?

- Study blames faulty immune response for severe H1N1 in adults

- Universities found pandemic preparedness paid off

- Flu Vaccination Disparities Exacerbated by Supply Problems

FLU RESOURCES
- NEW PROGRAM FOR COMMUNICATING ABOUT CHILDHOOD INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION
  The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases' (NFID's) Childhood Influenza Immunization Coalition recently launched a ready-to-use program, InFLUencer, to help healthcare professionals (HCPs) engage in ongoing communication about childhood influenza immunization.

Stay up-to-date with:
- MDCH: www.michigan.gov/flu
- CDC: www.cdc.gov/flu
  - Everyone--Universal recommendations
  - Pregnant women
  - Minority populations
- HHS: www.flu.gov

FluBytes is distributed to MDCH flu partners for informational and communication purposes. Please feel free to distribute widely. Archived editions of FluBytes can be found here. To access archived editions of MI FluFocus click here.