



County of Erie

CHRIS COLLINS
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ANTHONY J. BILLITTIER IV, M.D., FACEP
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH

HEALTH ADVISORY # 252

AUGUST 21, 2009

**2009-2010 INFLUENZA SEASONAL VACCINE SUPPLY DETERMINATION AS REQUIRED
BY PUBLIC HEALTH LAW §2112**

Please distribute to Infection Control Department, Emergency Department, Employee Health Service, Infectious Disease Department, Director of Nursing, Medical Director, Pharmacy Department, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and all primary care providers.

Effective July 1, 2008, New York State Public Health Law (PHL) §2112 prohibits the administration of vaccines containing more than trace amounts of thimerosal, a mercury-containing preservative, to children less than 3 years of age and women who know they are pregnant, with certain exceptions. This law requires that the Commissioner of Health make a yearly determination as to whether there exists an adequate supply of influenza vaccine that contains not more than 1.25 micrograms of mercury per 0.50 milliliter dose for women who know they are pregnant. The Commissioner of Health has determined that, as of August 15, 2009, there appears to be an adequate supply of such influenza vaccine for vaccination of pregnant women. In addition, there also appears to be an adequate supply of influenza vaccine that contains not more than 0.625 micrograms of mercury per 0.25 milliliter dose for vaccination of children less than 3 years of age. **Therefore, providers are required to purchase seasonal influenza vaccine that complies with PHL §2112 for pregnant women and children under three years of age only.** In the event of late failure of vaccine production, it may be necessary for the Commissioner to modify this determination.

Providers are expected to seek out vaccine that complies with PHL §2112. However, in those instances when providers have in good faith sought out influenza vaccine that complies with PHL §2112 but such vaccine cannot be obtained, vaccination of children under 3 years old and pregnant women is still recommended because the substantial risk of complications or death from influenza disease in these groups outweighs the unproven risk of vaccination with thimerosal-containing vaccine.

An official notification about PHL §2112 was released on April 23, 2008, in the form of a Health Advisory and can be viewed at:

https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/hpn/ctrldocs/alrtview/postings/doc080423_0.pdf

Novel H1N1 Vaccine

The Federal government is working on a Novel H1N1 vaccine that will most likely be available in the fall. This declaration does not apply to Novel H1N1 vaccine. A separate communication will be issued about thimerosal and Novel H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available.

Additional Information

Additional information regarding vaccine safety, including the use of thimerosal in vaccines, can be obtained at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Immunization Program website at <http://www.cdc.gov/od/science/iso/>, and at the website of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration at <http://www.fda.gov/cber/vaccine/thimerosal.htm>.

For further information, please contact the Erie County Department of Health's Immunization Action Program at 716-961-6839 or the regional New York State Department of Health Bureau of Immunization representative at 716-847-4385.

For questions about ordering vaccine in New York State (outside of New York City), Vaccines for Children (VFC) providers can call 518-474-2506 or toll free at 800-543-7468 during business hours.

Health Category Definitions:

Health Alert FLASH: conveys the highest level of importance due to a large-scale, catastrophic public health emergency; warrants immediate action or attention

Health Alert Priority: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention to a health problem or situation

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; no immediate action necessary