



October, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As you may know, the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus is causing illness in Nashville and around the country. The illness is usually mild, but there have been some cases of severe illness and death. Many children have gotten 2009 H1N1 infection, and there have been outbreaks in some schools. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that children and young adults aged 6 months through 24 years be vaccinated against 2009 H1N1 as soon as the vaccine is available.

The H1N1 flu vaccination is the best way to protect your child from this potentially serious illness. The Metro Public Health Department will be giving H1N1 vaccinations at your child's school. We will start these vaccinations when the vaccine becomes available, which is likely to be toward the end of October. Your child's school will announce the specific date for vaccinations in their school. If your child is less than ten years old, he/she will need two doses of vaccine 4 weeks apart. We will return to the school and give the second dose as needed. There will be no cost to you for this vaccine.

On the consent form you may either accept or refuse the vaccination for your child. If you do not consent, the vaccination will not be given to your child. If you change your mind after signing the consent, simply send a signed note to school asking to withdraw your consent for the flu shot.

Both the Flu Mist nasal spray and the Flu shot will be offered. Some children should not get Flu Mist, so please answer the questions on the attached/enclosed consent form to help us determine if your child can receive the Flu Mist or the Flu shot.

We will only give the vaccination if your child cooperates. We will not force or restrain your child. If we are unable to give the vaccine, we will send a note home letting you know the vaccine was not given.

The H1N1 vaccine will be available at many places in addition to your child's school. Your child's medical provider will be able to give your child the regular seasonal influenza vaccine and may also be able to give your child the 2009 H1N1 vaccine.

If you have any questions about the vaccine or the vaccination clinics, please call: 615-340-7775 from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Also please visit the MPHD's 2009 H1N1 influenza web site at <http://health.nashville.gov/> for more information. Your child's health care provider also can answer your questions about the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus.

Sincerely,

Bill Paul, MD, MPH
Director of Health
Metro Public Health Department