

H1N1 Influenza Vaccine Fact Sheet

Peel Public Health is making immunization against H1N1 influenza available at clinics offered throughout Peel. All residents of Ontario have the opportunity to receive free H1N1 influenza (flu) vaccine funded by the Federal and Provincial governments.

What is H1N1 influenza and how is it spread?

- H1N1 Influenza (commonly known as "Swine flu") is a serious respiratory infection that is caused by the influenza virus
- H1N1 Influenza is spread easily through coughing, sneezing or through touching contaminated surfaces or objects like unwashed hands, toys and eating utensils

How is H1N1 influenza prevented?

- H1N1 Influenza can be prevented by getting the H1N1 vaccine this year
- Practicing good hand washing regularly is always an important part of remaining healthy and preventing the spread of infectious diseases, including H1N1 influenza

Facts about the H1N1 influenza vaccine, Arepanrix™:

- The H1N1 vaccine is voluntary in Ontario, free of charge, and available to all residents over 6 months of age.
- It is safe and effective in preventing H1N1 influenza illness
- The vaccine contains an adjuvant to help the body develop good protection against H1N1 influenza.
- Although the vaccine contains part of the actual influenza virus, the virus is dead and **cannot give you the flu**
- The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends that children between the ages of 6 months and 9 years of age have two doses of the vaccine given at least 21 days apart.

Potential side effects of the H1N1 influenza vaccine, Arepanrix™:

- Most people have few or no side effects from the flu vaccine
- Side effects may include soreness, redness or swelling at the injection site. Occasionally fever or muscle aches may occur and last up to two days
- Although serious allergic reactions can occur, they are very rare. If they do occur, it is within a few minutes to a few hours after receiving the injection
- The following side effects after receiving a flu vaccine should be reported to your family physician and to the health department as they could be symptoms of Oculo-Respiratory Syndrome:
 - Redness of the eyes, with or without discharge
 - Respiratory symptoms such as a cough
 - Swelling of the face

The following people should not receive the vaccine:

- Infants under 6 months of age
- Persons with a serious allergy (anaphylaxis) to eggs or egg products
- Persons who have a severe allergy to any component of the vaccine. (Components include: thimerosal, disodium hydrogen phosphate, potassium dihydrogen phosphate,

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Squalene oil, DL- α -tacepherol, polysorbate-80). Please discuss this further with the nurse or family physician.

- Persons who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose of the influenza vaccine

Peel Public Health clinic staff will refer the following individuals to their family doctor if they want to be immunized:

- Children under the age of one year
- Pregnant women
- Persons who have a new or evolving neurological condition
- Persons with a history of Guillain-Barré Syndrome
- Persons with a history of Oculo-Respiratory Syndrome after receiving the flu vaccine

Important information about receiving an influenza injection at a Peel Public Health clinic:

- Persons who are acutely ill or have a fever should wait until they feel better before getting the H1N1 influenza vaccine
- Children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by their parent or legal guardian or present the Peel Public Health H1N1 Influenza Vaccine, Arepanrix™ Consent Form signed by their parent or legal guardian. *Individuals 14 years of age and older may sign their own consent*
- A short sleeved or loose shirt should be worn

Contact your family doctor or go to the nearest emergency room right away if you have any of these symptoms in the next two weeks following immunization:

- High fever or hives
- Swelling of the mouth, throat, tongue or face
- Difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing
- Lasting or worsening weakness
- Fast heart beat, dizziness or convulsions
- Any other unusual condition or serious reaction

Symptoms should also be reported to Peel Public Health as soon as possible (905-799-7700).

Please note that individuals will need to stay at the clinic to be monitored for 15 minutes after receiving the vaccine.

If after receiving this vaccine an adverse event or side effect occurs, the client/parent/legal guardian will be responsible for the costs of any medical services or treatments received should the individual being immunized not have a valid Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) card/number.

For more information please contact Peel Public Health at 905-799-7700 or visit our web site at www.immunizepeel.ca Caledon residents can call free of charge at: 905-584-2216