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## **News Release**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

From: Trish Lees, 928-679-7331

Date: September 4, 2009

### **Seasonal Flu Vaccination Clinics Scheduled**

**H1N1 (swine) flu vaccinations are different from seasonal flu shots. H1N1 (swine) flu shots are not currently available; however seasonal flu shots are available now.**

Coconino County Health Department officials are urging citizens to get a seasonal flu shot now as the best way to prevent illness from seasonal flu. More than 200,000 people are hospitalized in the United States each year with the seasonal flu and there are an estimated 36,000 deaths annually. Up to 80 percent of all deaths from seasonal influenza can be prevented with a flu shot, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Coconino County Health Department strongly recommends the seasonal flu vaccination.

In an effort to provide seasonal flu vaccinations as early as possible this flu season, the Coconino County Health Department (CCHD) has scheduled 4 clinics in September.

**To make an appointment for a seasonal flu shot, contact your healthcare provider or call the Coconino County Health Department at 928-679-7300 or toll free at 1-877-679-7272. CCHD clinic scheduling representatives will be available beginning Tuesday, September 8 at 9:00 am.**

**September Seasonal Flu Vaccination Clinics are scheduled on the following dates:**

**Flagstaff:**

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| <b>Monday, Sept. 14</b> | <b>8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Coconino County Health and Community Services building, 2625 N. King Street,</b> |
| <b>Monday, Sept. 21</b> | <b>8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Coconino County Health and Community Services building, 2625 N. King Street</b>  |
| <b>Monday, Sept 28</b>  | <b>8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Coconino County Health and Community Services building, 2625 N. King Street</b>  |

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| <b>Thursday, Sept 24</b> | <b>10:00 am – 5:00 pm, Town House, 601 S. Navajo (Next to the City Park)<br/>(Call toll-free during normal business hours to schedule an appointment at 1-877-679-7272)</b> |
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Seasonal flu vaccinations for children age 18 and under are \$15. Adult seasonal flu vaccinations are \$25. No one will be denied service due to inability to pay.

Vaccinations are free for people who have Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona (excluding Medicare supplement customers and Out-of-state Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan members.), Medicare, AHCCCS, Health Choice Arizona and Phoenix Health Plans. (Ask your scheduling representative for details.) You must present your insurance card at the time of service.

Pneumonia vaccinations will be available for a cost of \$30. Pneumonia vaccinations are recommended for individuals age 65 and older and for some high risk groups. (Ask your scheduling representative for details.)

The Health Department will also offer seasonal flu shots at regularly scheduled clinics on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at the Coconino County Health and Community Services building, 2625 N. King Street, Flagstaff. Please call the CCHD Flu Information Line at 928-679-7300, toll-free at 1-877-679-7272 for appointment information.

Additional community seasonal flu vaccination clinics will be scheduled. Please check the CCHD website at [www.coconino.az.gov/health](http://www.coconino.az.gov/health) for updated clinic schedules or call the CCHD Flu Information Line at 928-679-7300 for information.

In general, anyone who wants to reduce their chances of getting the seasonal flu should get vaccinated. However, certain people should get vaccinated each year either because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications or because they live with or care for high risk persons. Those considered at high risk for serious seasonal flu complications are the elderly, young children, and people with certain health conditions. Pneumonia vaccinations are also strongly encouraged for people over age 65 or who have chronic illnesses.

People who should get a seasonal flu vaccination each year are:

- All children age 6 months to 18 years
- Adults age 50 years and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- Pregnant women
- Residents of nursing homes, long-term care facilities and dormitories
- Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months
- Health-care workers
- Household contacts of person at high risk for complications from the flu
- Anyone who wants to be protected against the flu

Since children are considered a primary transmitter of the flu, the CDC recommends that children of all ages get a seasonal flu shot.

Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

In addition to getting a seasonal flu shot, good health habits will help you stay well. These simple actions can stop the spread of germs and help protect you and others from getting sick:

- Wash your hands frequently during the flu season.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your mouth with your upper sleeve or with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Don't share eating utensils, cups, and straws.
- Stay home when you are sick.

**H1N1 (swine) flu vaccinations are different from seasonal flu shots and are not currently available.** The H1N1 (swine) flu vaccine is expected to be available in late October. The initial shipment of vaccine will be reserved for priority high risk groups as follows:

- Pregnant women,
- Children 6 months to 4 years old,
- Children between 5 and 18 with underlying health conditions – neuromuscular disease, diabetes, underlying heart or lung conditions, or suppressed immune system
- Anyone who lives with and cares for children less than 6 months old, and
- Health care (including Emergency Medical Services) workers with direct patient contact.

As additional H1N1 (swine) flu vaccine is received, the vaccine will be made available to a wider risk groups and then, when supplies allow, to the general public.

For more information, call the Coconino County Health Department at 928-679-7300 or toll-free 1-877-679-7272.

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