

2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccine and Pregnancy

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Hello, my name is Dr. Sonja Rasmussen. The topic: 2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccine and Pregnancy.

Based on information from previous influenza pandemics, seasonal influenza, and from the current 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak, pregnant women are at increased risk for severe complications and death from influenza. For this reason, pregnant women should receive both seasonal and 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccines. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have recommended seasonal influenza vaccine for pregnant women in any trimester for a number of years. In addition to the protection provided for pregnant women, influenza vaccine given during pregnancy has been shown to prevent influenza in infants less than six months of age who are unable to get the influenza vaccine themselves.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has recently released guidance for use of the 2009 H1N1 vaccine. Pregnant women are included as one of the five initial target groups for vaccination efforts.

There are three different vaccine types. The live attenuated vaccine, or nasal spray, is not licensed for use in pregnant women. The inactivated vaccine, or the flu shot, is available in two formulations – as a multidose vaccine or as a pre-filled, single dose vaccine which is preservative-free. Either of the formulations of inactivated vaccine is recommended for use in pregnant women. Although there is no evidence that the preservative used, thimerosal, is harmful, a thimerosal-free formulation will be available for pregnant women.

H1N1 vaccine can be given at anytime during pregnancy. In addition, women who are postpartum are also recommended to receive the vaccine, as are all household contacts and caregivers for infants younger than six months of age.

Seasonal and 2009 H1N1 vaccines may be administered on the same day but need to be given at different sites, for example one shot in the left arm and one in the right .

Seasonal influenza vaccine has been used for many years in pregnant women with an excellent safety record. The 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine is made using the same processes and facilities that are used to make seasonal influenza vaccines; therefore safety is expected to be similar to that for seasonal flu vaccine.

Thank you.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.