



## 2009 Influenza Fact Sheet

- “Flu”, or influenza, is a highly contagious upper respiratory disease that affects the entire body. A virus causes the flu and it can be contracted in virtually any type of climate (flu is not just a cold weather disease). When an infected person sneezes, coughs or even talks, the flu is expelled into the air and may be inhaled by anyone in the area. It can also be transmitted by direct hand contact.
- The victim of influenza becomes acutely ill, with rapid onset of fever, chills, weakness and severe muscle aches. Symptoms may include a sore throat, cough and nausea. Most people who contract the disease recover within two weeks. However, for elderly people, small children and chronically ill individuals, flu and its complications can be life threatening. Outbreaks of influenza usually begin abruptly. As the disease spreads through communities, cases may peak in about 3 weeks with as much as 50% of the population being affected.
- This vaccine contains killed influenza virus of the 3 types selected by the US Public Health Service and the Center for Biologics Evaluation of the US Food and Drug Administration. The types of strains included are those predicted to cause the most influenza. The vaccine will not give you influenza because it is not produced with live virus.
- **This vaccine immunizes against the following strains of influenza for 2009:**
  - A/Brisbane/59/2007 (H1N1)-like, A/Brisbane/10/2007 (H3N2)-like, B/Brisbane/60/2008 – like virus.
- **Risks and Possible Side Effects**
  - Influenza vaccine generally causes only mild side effects that occur at low frequency. Most commonly, the reactions may be a sore or tender arm at the injection site, or possibly fever, chills, headache, or muscle aches. These effects
  - usually last 24 to 48 hours. Most people who receive the vaccine either have no or only a mild reaction. There is a possibility, as with any vaccine or drug, that a severe systemic reaction such as anaphylaxis, or even death could occur. Moreover, untoward medical events completely unrelated to vaccine administration may occur coincidentally in the aftermath period following vaccination. Guillain-Barre syndrome has occurred rarely in temporal association with administration of influenza vaccine, but no cause and effect relationship has been established.
- **Do Not request influenza vaccine if you:**
  - • Have allergies or sensitivities to chicken, chicken eggs or chicken feathers.
  - • Have a history of neurological symptoms or ever had Guillain- Barre Syndrome
  - • Have a febrile respiratory illness or an active infection
  - • Have received a prior flu vaccination and experienced severe side effects
  - • Have received another vaccination in the last 14 days (other than pneumonia or tuberculosis)
  - Cannot understand the consent form due to language