

Current Influenza Vaccine Supply Situation
Recorded Information Line – 10/12/04
Option 1

All influenza clinics in Broome County continue to be on hold temporarily. This includes the Broome County Health Department and Office for Aging flu clinics that were scheduled to begin in the last week of October. The Broome County health care community is working very closely together to determine which organizations and providers have vaccine and how much in order to insure that whatever vaccine is available gets to people who are most likely to become seriously ill if they get the flu.

It is important for the public to realize that there has not been a change in the influenza activity at this point, only in the availability of the vaccine. There is no need for the public to panic.

However, once flu clinics and immunizations begin, it is necessary that only those that meet the Centers for Disease Control and New York State Department of Health high risk criteria receive vaccine. All providers and community clinics will be using these categories as screening guidance for those who will be able to get the vaccine.

The following priority groups for vaccination with inactivated influenza vaccine this season are considered to be of equal importance and are:

- All children aged 6 – 23 months;
- Adults aged 65 years or older;
- Persons aged 2 – 64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions;
- All women who will be pregnant during the influenza season;
- Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities;
- Children aged 6 months – 18 years on chronic aspirin therapy;
- Health-care workers involved in direct patient care; and out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged less than 6 months.

If you are in one of these priority groups, please wait to call your primary care provider to schedule an appointment. We are asking residents to be patient and understanding.

The Federal Government is working with Adventis Pasteur to redistribute vaccine to those who provide care to individuals at highest risk of severe illness and hospitalization from influenza.

If you are not included in one of these priority groups, please don't ask for a flu shot. Save it for someone who needs it more! For most healthy adults, coming down with the flu is an annoyance, but not a serious health threat.

You can protect yourself and our community from the flu by washing your hands frequently, covering your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze and staying home from work or school if you have symptoms of a cold or flu.

The vaccine from the manufacturer Chiron has not been distributed at all in this country, so any vaccine that will be provided is safe.

Please follow the news and you are welcome to check back to the website at www.gobroomecounty.com and click on the Flu Icon or the Recorded Information Line at 778-3911, option 1, for updates. As we have more information we will provide it to the public.