



**NASSAU COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**
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November 9, 2009

Dear School Administrators and School Community:

As you are aware, the flu season is here and I wanted to update you on the latest information available. The CDC has determined that influenza activity is widespread throughout the country, including our region. At this point, also according to the CDC, nearly all influenza is the H1N1 strain. Therefore, we are seeing flu in our community, including our schools, churches, and residences.

There is also confusion regarding testing. Official confirmation of H1N1 flu is limited to hospitals which are testing those who are severely ill. Doctors may be performing rapid flu-A tests on patients in their offices to screen for flu. Again, whether tested, or not, influenza-like-illness is assumed to be H1N1 at this time. Because H1N1 is widespread in our community and right now is mild, it is not tracked on an individual, case-by-case basis.

The H1N1 vaccine is now available, though in limited supply. Seasonal flu vaccine is also available, but also in limited supply. Nassau County Department of Health encourages vaccination for both as the best preventive measure. Please check with your health care providers regularly for vaccine availability, as we expect it to increase over the next few months. For those with no primary health care provider, periodic vaccination clinics will be available in the upcoming months; please check newspapers, radio and other local media for information or call the Nassau County Flu Hotline at 1-888-684-4271. Please note that H1N1 vaccination is limited to those in the following priority groups:

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age
- Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

Nassau County Department of Health appreciates the cooperation of parents, schools and the community in an effort to limit transmission. Please keep your sick children home until 24 hours, fever free, without medication. Continue to follow hygienic practices.

Thank you for your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maria Torroella Carney", is written over a horizontal line.

Maria Torroella Carney, MD, FACP
Commissioner
Nassau County Department of Health