



St. Mary's County Health Department

William B. Icenhower, M.D., M.P.H.
Health Officer

Administration & Vital Records	301-475-4330
Community Health Services	301-475-4330
Resource Coordination	301-475-4389
Environmental Health	301-475-4321
Environmental Health Fax	301-475-4373
Medical Assistance Transportation	301-475-4296
State Health Department (Toll Free)	877-4MD-DHMH
Maryland Relay Service	1-800-735-2258

September 7, 2009

Dear Parent or Guardian:

As you are no doubt aware, "flu season" is approaching. There will be two types of flu vaccine administered this year – an H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine and the regular seasonal flu vaccine. I am pleased to announce that St. Mary's County Health Department, in partnership with St. Mary's County Public Schools and the Board of St. Mary's County Commissioners, will offer both seasonal and H1N1 vaccines to all school age children free of charge. We will be having clinics in each of our public schools.

The vaccine will be administered in the form of a nasal spray or as traditional flu shots to children unable to receive the nasal mist for medical reasons. The Novel Influenza A Virus, H1N1 flu vaccine will be offered as soon as it is available. Please read the enclosed information and return the signed consent form to your child's school by **September 18, 2009**, if you want your child to be vaccinated. A separate consent form for H1N1 will be sent home when that vaccine becomes available.

I strongly recommend that your child receive both flu vaccines. Influenza is a viral infection that sickens millions of people each year and has the potential to cause serious complications, especially in children. Vaccinating children will reduce the spread of influenza as well as decrease absenteeism, decrease the number of doctors' visits, decrease the number of medications needed, and reduce the number of missed workdays by adults. It is especially important this year as we see the H1N1 flu continue to occur in young persons in particular.

If you have any questions, or if you would like more information about flu vaccine and the activities planned for this fall, the following resources are suggested:

- Contact your family physician
- Contact the health department at 301-475-4316
- Check our website at www.smchd.org
- Check the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/flu

Please take advantage of this opportunity to protect the health of your child and your family.

Sincerely,

William B. Icenhower, M.D., M.P.H.
Health Officer

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Enclosures