



**P R E S S R E L E A S E**

**News Media Contact:**

Susan Klein-Rothschild  
Public Information Officer  
(805) 681-5435  
(805) 896-1057 (cell)  
[sklein@sbcphd.org](mailto:sklein@sbcphd.org)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Santa Barbara County Expands H1N1 Vaccine Clinics to Adults with Chronic Medical Conditions**

The Public Health Department is expanding the target groups to receive H1N1 vaccination at community clinics to include adults over 24 years of age with chronic medical conditions, persons who provide care for infants under 6 months of age, and all persons up to 24 years of age. Only healthy adults 25 years and older who are not healthcare or emergency workers are asked to defer immunization for another few weeks.

Between October 28, 2009 and November 30, 2009, the Public Health Department has provided 12 community vaccination clinics for individuals at high risk for severe illness with H1N1 flu. These clinics have successfully vaccinated nearly 10,000 of our high risk residents.

With the continued delivery of H1N1 vaccine, the Public Health Department is able to expand the target groups to receive vaccine at future community clinics noted below to include:

- Pregnant women (and their partners if due before March)
- Persons who provide care for infants under 6 months
- Children and young adults through 24 years of age (including second doses for children under the age of 10)
- Individuals 25 years and older with chronic medical conditions
- All healthcare workers

Upcoming H1N1 community vaccination clinics are scheduled as noted below:

City	Location	Date	Time
Santa Ynez	Veterans Hall 1745 Mission Drive	Wednesday, 12/2	3:00 pm – 7:00 pm*
Santa Maria	Santa Maria Public Health Clinic 2115 S. Centerpointe Parkway	Saturday, 12/5	9:00 am – 1:00 pm*
Santa Barbara	Earl Warren Showgrounds 3400 Calle Real	Monday, 12/7	3:00 pm – 7:00 pm*
Lompoc	Methodist Church 925 N. F Street	Thursday, 12/ 10	3:00 pm – 7:00 pm*
Carpinteria	Carpinteria Fire Station 911 Walnut Avenue	Saturday, 12/12	10:00 am 2:00 pm*

\* Vaccination clinics will end at the designated time or earlier if vaccine supplies are exhausted.

In addition to the community clinics, private healthcare providers have received and administered vaccine to patients. Dr. Peter Hasler, Health Officer, noted, "We are grateful to the many healthcare providers in our community who registered and received vaccine, proactively reached out to patients at risk and vaccinated those in their care. A special thanks goes out to Cottage Health System and Marian Medical Center, which shared vaccine with the Health Department and critical community providers."

Another factor which has supported the success of the vaccination clinics is an exemption by the California Health and Human Services Agency. This agency, in concert with Governor Schwarzenegger, developed an exemption to the California Mercury Free Vaccine Act. This exemption, which has been extended through September 30, 2010, allows preservative-containing H1N1 flu vaccine to be administered to children under 3 years old and pregnant women.

Although the rate of infection has slowed down, the prevalence of H1N1 flu is still at epidemic levels and still causing severe illness and death in the County. The Health Department continues to stress the need for personal responsibility to decrease the spread of disease and to seek care immediately if a person has a high risk condition and flu symptoms. Because the holidays are a time of travel and private and public events where people mix and mingle, the PHD reminds residents of the basics of prevention:

- Handwashing especially after direct contact with others (at parties where hugs and handshakes are frequent) and before eating
- Avoid touching mouth, nose and eyes unless hands are recently washed or hand sanitizer is used
- Cover coughs and sneezes and follow with hand cleansing
- Avoid sick people and stay home if you are sick

For ideas on safe travel during the holidays, go to <http://www.flu.gov/individualfamily/travelers/>.

As we receive more vaccine, additional vaccination clinics will be scheduled. Questions may be directed to the PHD H1N1 Public Hotline at 1-888-722-6358. Additional information is on the PHD website: [www.sbcfluinfo.org](http://www.sbcfluinfo.org) or follow us on twitter at SBCPublicHealth.

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