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CDC Recommendations for Influenza Prevention

On December 11, 2003, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will release an update on influenza activity in the United States for the 2003-04 season in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*. Because of concerns about influenza vaccine shortages, the update will include new recommendations, modified from those appearing in an earlier HAN Update released November 21, 2003. Current recommendations include:

Vaccination

- Emphasis should be placed on targeting trivalent inactivated vaccine to persons at high risk for complications from influenza: healthy children aged 6–23 months, adults aged ≥ 65 years, pregnant women in their second or third trimester during influenza season, and persons aged ≥ 2 years with underlying chronic conditions.
- Persons at high risk should be encouraged to search locally for vaccine if their usual health-care provider no longer has vaccine available.
- All children at high risk, including those aged 6–23 months, who report for vaccination should be vaccinated with a first or second dose, depending on vaccination status. Doses should not be held in reserve to ensure that two doses will be available.
- Next priority should be given to vaccinating those persons at greatest risk for transmission of disease to persons at high risk, including household contacts and health-care workers.
- Healthy persons aged 5-49 years should be encouraged to be vaccinated with intranasally administered live, attenuated influenza vaccine.
- Decisions about vaccinating healthy persons, including adults aged 50–64 years, with inactivated influenza vaccine should be made on a case-by-case basis, depending on local disease activity, vaccine coverage, feasibility, and supply.
- Health departments should work with their health-care providers to reallocate influenza vaccine to health-care providers in need when possible.

Hygiene

- Good respiratory hygiene should be encouraged, including cleaning of hands, and staying at home when symptomatic with fever and respiratory illness.

Medication

- Antiviral medications with specific activity against influenza A viruses should be considered either for treatment or chemoprophylaxis for influenza A, especially in persons at high risk for complications from influenza.

For further information on influenza, see <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) protects people's health and safety by preventing and controlling diseases and injuries; enhances health decisions by providing credible information on critical health issues; and promotes healthy living through strong partnerships with local, national and international organizations.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES