

# H1N1 Vaccine Safety

## Did You Know...?

**There has been some questions and concerns expressed about the H1N1 vaccine. Below are some answers to help set the record straight.**

- It will not be a state mandate that you get the vaccine. Before receiving the H1N1 flu vaccine, you will get a federally-required fact sheet, called a vaccine information statement (VIS). It covers the risk and benefits of the vaccine.
- The H1N1 flu vaccine is manufactured using the same process and facilities as the seasonal flu vaccine. It is in no way "experimental".
- H1N1 flu vaccine has undergone clinical trials to ensure the safety and efficacy for both children and adults; including pregnant women.
- The federal government is taking precautions to ensure that the H1N1 vaccine is safe, just as they do each year with the "seasonal" flu vaccine.
- As with the seasonal flu vaccine, the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will require the same process for the release of the H1N1 flu vaccine.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) will be closely monitoring for any side effect that may be associated with the vaccine.
- The virus in the H1N1 flu shot is inactivated (killed) so it cannot cause the H1N1 virus. If you get the vaccine in nasal spray form ("FluMist"), the virus will be alive but weakened, so it can't grow in the lung and cause illness.
- The H1N1 vaccine does not contain any adjuvant - (a substance added to vaccine to increase the body's immune response to the vaccine) in any form of the vaccine- "mist" or "injectable". In the United States only seasonal & H1N1 vaccines do not contain adjuvants.
- Some H1N1 vaccine contain Thimerosal (a preservative to prevent contamination); however, current scientific research reviewed by the Minnesota Department of Health shows no evidence of harm caused by small amounts of Thimerosal in vaccines, beyond possible minor reactions like: redness and swelling at the injection site.

Source: "H1N1 Flu Vaccine: Setting the Record Straight" (MDH – October 2009)