

Alpine Women's Healthcare, P.C.

Obstetrics ● Gynecology ● Incontinence ● Infertility

The Flu season is upon us and in 2009, the situation is most confusing. There are separate concerns for “regular” influenza and “swine” flu, otherwise called H1N1.

Symptoms for both types of flu are the same:

1. Fever **over 100 degrees**
2. Cough, congestion
3. Difficulty breathing
4. **Severe, persistent malaise**
5. **Chest pain, light sensitivity, and eye problems**

In agreement with the Colorado State Health Department's protocol, we will not be doing testing for either kind of flu virus. Testing is only done on patients admitted to hospitals and emergency rooms.

Pregnancy does NOT offer more protection from either flu. In fact, women are sicker with the flu when they are pregnant than when they are not pregnant.

All flu vaccines are safe in all trimesters of pregnancy. We encourage the regular influenza vaccine to be obtained now, anywhere it is being offered. This is a “killed virus” vaccine. If you are allergic to eggs, please discuss with your primary provider before receiving the vaccine.

The H1N1 vaccine will also be a “killed virus” vaccine and will only be available through certain providers.

- Alpine Women's Healthcare WILL BE a provider of the H1N1 **INTRAMUSCULAR** vaccine for our **obstetrical patients only**.** Egg-allergic patients should discuss risks and benefits with their primary care provider before receiving this vaccine. **Pregnant women should NOT receive the FluMist nasal vaccine.**
- We will NOT be providing the regular influenza vaccine.

Populations at higher risk who should receive the H1N1 vaccine include those 2 yrs old – 24 yrs old, people 25 – 49 who live with or care for infants <6 mo old, and people with chronic health conditions whose immune systems may be weakened.

Women over the age of 50 also are encouraged to be vaccinated with the regular influenza vaccine. Immune systems are altered after the age of 50 and it may take several years of vaccine to develop immunity, regardless of which virus strain for which the vaccine is being given.

Please go to the following websites for additional information and concerns about other risk groups:

1. Tri-County Health – www.tchd.org
2. Colorado Department of Public Health – www.cdphe.state.co.us/epr/h1n1

**More information about the availability of the H1N1 vaccine will be coming in the future as it is made available to our office.