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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Media Contact: Melissa Dexter
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317-234-6578

STATE HEALTH OFFICIALS ENCOURAGE HOOSIERS TO GET SEASONAL FLU VACCINE

The Indiana State Health Department is encouraging Hoosiers to get a seasonal influenza vaccine, which is now available in most communities.

The seasonal flu vaccine will not provide protection against the 2009 H1N1 Influenza A, but state health officials say it is still important to get the seasonal flu vaccine. About 36,000 people die each year in the United States due to seasonal flu-related illnesses.

The seasonal flu vaccine is recommended for everyone over six months of age, unless they have been told by a healthcare provider they should not receive flu vaccine. Receipt of the seasonal flu vaccine is particularly important for young children, individuals with chronic diseases or compromised immune systems, and persons over age 65. State health officials remind Hoosiers that it is not "too early" to get the seasonal flu vaccine.

These are not the same at-risk groups being targeted to receive the first doses of the 2009 H1N1 Influenza A vaccine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expects the 2009 H1N1 Influenza A vaccine to start being available in mid-October. These at-risk groups are encouraged to get the seasonal flu vaccine as soon as it is offered to them locally and not to wait until the 2009 H1N1 Influenza A vaccine is available.

When getting a flu shot, people are encouraged to talk with their doctor about which vaccine they are receiving. Currently, any flu vaccine being offered by health care providers is for the seasonal flu, NOT the 2009 H1N1 Influenza A.

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