



News Release

***Prevention, Protection, Promotion
Daggett, Duchesne and Uintah Counties***

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Pregnancy and 2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccine

What You Should Know

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Pregnant women who get any type of flu have a greater chance for serious health problems: getting the flu shot is the best way to protect against the flu. Compared with the general population, pregnant women with 2009 H1N1 flu are more likely to be admitted to hospitals, develop serious illness and death from H1N1. Flu shots provide protection for both the woman and her baby. Research has found that when a pregnant woman has had a flu shot her baby has less likelihood of developing flu.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), there is no evidence that thimerisol (a mercury preservative in vaccine that comes in multi-dose vials) is harmful to a pregnant woman or fetus. However, because some women are concerned about thimerisol during pregnancy, vaccine companies are offering a preservative-free vaccine for pregnant women and small children. CDC advises pregnant women to get flu shots either with or without thimerisol. Additionally, there are no adjuvants (agents such as squalene that increase effectiveness) in vaccine manufactured in the United States.

Both seasonal and H1N1 flu shots are recommended for pregnant women at any time during pregnancy. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the use of one H1N1 shot for full protection. If a pregnant woman had a flu-like illness that was not laboratory confirmed as H1N1, she should still receive the vaccine to guarantee protection.

Pregnant women should not receive nasal spray vaccine, but it is safe for a woman to be in contact with family members or close contacts of those who have received the nasal mist vaccine. If a woman has already delivered without receiving the vaccine and is currently breastfeeding, she should still receive vaccine. Breastfeeding provides secondary protection to the infant. Maternal vaccination is especially important for infants less than 6 months old, who are ineligible for vaccination. In addition, transfer of vaccination-related antibodies by breastfeeding further reduces the infant's chances of getting sick with the flu.

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