

H1N1 (Swine Flu) Vaccine and Thimerosal Suspension: Patient Notification Requirements

September 2009



State law (RCW 70.95M.115) limits the amount of thimerosal in influenza vaccine to 1.0 micrograms per 0.5 milliliter dose for pregnant women and children younger than three years old. The Washington State secretary of health temporarily suspended this limit for H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine. This gives these groups the choice to be vaccinated with H1N1 influenza vaccine that contains thimerosal if thimerosal-free vaccine is not available.

The suspension of thimerosal limits is for H1N1 influenza vaccine only. It does not apply to seasonal influenza vaccine.

The suspension will last until March 23, 2010, at which time the secretary will determine if it should be extended. **During the suspension, state law requires the following populations be notified if they are to receive an H1N1 vaccine that exceeds the thimerosal limits described in law:**

- Women known to be pregnant or lactating
- Parents or guardians of children under 18 years old who will receive the vaccine

Please note the populations to be notified are broader than defined in the original thimerosal limits. Health care providers must screen correctly before administering certain H1N1 vaccines. The chart below is designed to help providers identify the correct patients needing notification.

The Department of Health developed a sample notification document. This and other information regarding the thimerosal suspension for H1N1 vaccine is available at: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1/>.

H1N1 Influenza Vaccine/Thimerosal Notification Guide

