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Ontario Announces Flu Shot Rollout For Seasonal And H1N1 Vaccines

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Ontario will provide seasonal flu shots to people aged 65 and over and residents of long-term care homes in October, followed by the H1N1 flu vaccination program for all Ontarians. Seasonal flu vaccine will be available to the rest of the province following the H1N1 flu vaccination program.

Evidence shows the H1N1 flu virus will be the main flu strain in circulation this fall in Ontario. It is important to protect those most at risk for complications from catching the flu this year. Seniors are most at risk for complications from seasonal flu while younger people are more at risk for complications from H1N1 flu.

By targeting those most at risk for complications from either of the flu strains, the province is effectively delivering the vaccine people need most to stay healthy and reduce the spread of flu.

Some studies in Canada show a potential association between prior seasonal flu vaccination and the risk of getting an infection with the H1N1 virus. Ontario is taking a cautious approach and is phasing in two flu vaccine programs:

- In October, the seasonal flu vaccine will be offered to Ontarians 65 years and over and residents of long-term care homes
- H1N1 vaccine will be offered to the general population in November
- The universal seasonal influenza immunization program will be offered to all other residents six months of age and older in December/January.

QUICK FACTS

- Flu season in Ontario typically starts in October and ends in April.
- Ontarians born before 1957 appear to be less susceptible to the H1N1 flu virus.

LEARN MORE

- Stay up-to-date online for developments of Ontario's flu pandemic response.
- Ontario's Flu Vaccine Strategy

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"We know that seniors are at most risk for complications from seasonal flu. We have a good plan to provide the greatest protection from the flu where it's needed most."

– David Caplan
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

"It's a different flu season this year and rolling out two flu vaccine programs is a great example of how different it is. It's important to protect those among us who are most at risk for complications from the flu. I believe that this vaccine strategy is the best way to keep Ontario as healthy and safe as possible during the flu season this year."

– Dr. Arlene King
Chief Medical Officer of Health

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