



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Don't let influenza spoil your plans for Spring Break.**

HOWELL, Michigan (March 15, 2010) Although flu activity has declined in recent weeks, 2009 H1N1 Influenza viruses continue to spread in the United States and abroad, causing illness, hospitalizations and even deaths. Flu activity is difficult to predict, but experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) expect that flu activity — caused by 2009 H1N1 or seasonal flu viruses — will continue for weeks, and parts of the world may even see big outbreaks.

Last spring, we saw the spread of 2009 H1N1 result in a lot of illness following travel associated with “Spring Break.” Livingston County became the first Michigan county to have a case of H1N1. With the 2010 “Spring Break” coming up and students and families expected to travel both domestically and internationally, getting vaccinated against 2009 H1N1 influenza is especially important.

Influenza remains one of the leading causes of death in our society, and vaccination is the first and most important step in protecting against the flu. While less likely to get sick with H1N1 influenza than younger people, people 65 and older are at high risk of serious complications if they do become ill. Vaccination of people with certain health conditions is also important because they are at higher risk of serious flu-related complications

The 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine is readily available at LCDPH at our regular Immunization Clinic. It is open on Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. with extended hours on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month until 7:00 p.m. No appointments are needed; clients are seen on a walk-in basis. There is no charge for the H1N1 vaccine. For more information, go to [www.lchd.org](http://www.lchd.org) or call (517) 546-9850.

In addition to getting vaccinated, you can also take the following steps to help protect you from getting or spreading the flu and other illnesses while you're on break:

- **Talk to your health care provider** not only about 2009 H1N1, but also other recommended, routine vaccinations you may need if traveling, especially overseas.
- **Visit the CDC's Travelers' Health** website ([www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)) for more information and healthy travel recommendations to prevent influenza and other illnesses during travel. You can also find special information about spring break travel.

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- **Stay away from people who appear sick or are coughing or sneezing.** The main way the flu spreads is through the droplets of coughs and sneezes.
- **Practice good hygiene** by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing and sneezing. If soap and water is not available, alcohol-based hand rubs are useful.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
- Wash your hands often.
- **Don't share drinking glasses or utensils** – avoid drinking beverages mixed in a common container or eating after others.
- **Stay home (or away from others) if you are sick** for 24 hours after your fever is gone to prevent others from getting sick too

Spring Break is a time for rest, relaxation and fun with friends and family. Take the opportunity to get vaccinated before leaving for Spring Break and protect yourself, friends and family against 2009 H1N1 flu. Don't let influenza spoil your plans — get vaccinated against 2009 H1N1.

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