

Health Awareness

Even The Young And Healthy Can Catch The Flu

(NAPSA)—It may come as a surprise to some, but young adults aged 19 to 24 years may need to take more precautions than their elders to avoid the flu.

There is a good chance that 2009 H1N1 flu (sometimes called “swine flu”) will bring you down this year, and in a serious way. This new flu virus may be circulating in young social circles and you are advised to pay close attention, as it’s hitting young people particularly hard. That’s why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is urging all young people between the ages of 19 and 24 to get the H1N1 vaccine this flu season.

College students across the country are being slammed by this new virus. For many, this has been the hard way to learn that just because you’re young doesn’t mean you can’t get sick from the flu. Illness with H1N1 virus has ranged from mild to severe. While most people who have been sick have recovered without needing medical treatment, hospitalizations and deaths from infection with this virus have occurred, including in young, otherwise healthy people.

“What has been impressive is the rate at which the H1N1 flu is attacking young adults 19 to 24 years old, sometimes with serious consequences,” says Dr. Anne Schuchat, director of the CDC’s National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. “While most serious outcomes have occurred in people with chronic conditions like asthma and diabetes, about one-third of people who have been hospitalized with this virus have been otherwise healthy.”

That’s why CDC urges everyone between the ages of 19 and 24



Young Americans, their friends and families should know that 19- to 24-year-olds are particularly vulnerable to “swine flu.”

to get the H1N1 monovalent flu vaccine as soon as it’s available.

The H1N1 monovalent vaccine is produced the same way as seasonal flu vaccines, and the CDC expects the H1N1 influenza vaccine to have a similar safety profile as these vaccines, which have a very good track record. Since it takes two weeks to build immunity, it’s important to get vaccinated as soon as possible. The CDC and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will be closely monitoring for any signs that the vaccine is causing unexpected adverse events and will investigate any unusual events.

The good news is if you can’t stand needles, no worries. The H1N1 flu vaccine comes in a nasal spray, too. Your doctor, pharmacist and the health department can tell you where to get vaccinated. For more information, visit www.flu.gov or www.cdc.gov/flu or call 1-(800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).