

# MFA News

## Flu Procedures Update

Shipments of the H1N1 vaccine are beginning to arrive with the DC Department of Health. It will be dispensed first to First Responders, EMS teams and major hospital centers.

The MFA doesn't expect to begin receiving its supply until late-October.

The DC Department of Health anticipates it will receive enough vaccine to begin mass vaccination in December. Prior to that, these patients are ranked by the CDC as priorities:

- Pregnant women
- Family or caregivers with children under the age of 6 months
- Healthcare workers
- Children between 6 months old and 18 years old
- People 19-24 years old
- People 25-64 years old with underlying medical conditions such as asthma; chronic lung, heart or renal disease; immunosuppression
- Elderly



■ Alan Wasserman, MD  
President

***The MFA requires both Seasonal Influenza and H1N1 vaccinations for staff who work in patient care areas.***

### Treatment with Antivirals

Most people will recover from either type of influenza with simple treatments such as fluids and rest. You can take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) if you feel very uncomfortable. However, these drugs may prolong virus secretion. Some patients with severe infection will need support from antiviral medications such as Tamiflu or Relenza. In general, such patients should be hospitalized. Prophylactic distribution isn't recommended unless a patient:

- has an underlying health concern
- is pregnant
- has a child at home under 6 months of age

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### **Patient Care Procedures**

If you are treating a patient who displays influenza symptoms, put a surgical mask on the patient. You should wear a mask to reduce your risk of infection. Routine surgical masks and N95 masks are available from your clinic supervisor. The CDC is currently recommending N95 masks, but they are uncomfortable and difficult to use. The combination of surgical masks on both you and your patient should help to reduce infectivity.

If you come down with mild to moderate symptoms, stay home. Seek treatment if:

- your symptoms progress
- your fever lingers for three days or more
- you have an underlying medical condition such as diabetes, asthma, heart failure, a compromised immune system
- you are pregnant

The MFA requests that you stay home for a day after your fever breaks. If you have lingering symptoms such as a cough, wear a surgical mask.

Help prevent infection by washing your hands or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers frequently and by wiping down surfaces like desktops, keyboards, phones, counters and doorknobs with mild disinfectants.