



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

October 15, 2009

Dear Parent,

The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH), in partnership with school officials and Adopt-a-School Physicians, will be providing 2009 H1N1 (swine) flu vaccine free of charge in your child's school. It is important for children to receive this vaccination because children are at risk for severe complications from this virus. Also, children and young adults seem to be particularly at risk for getting this influenza.

As of October 3, 2009, 76 children have died from the swine flu virus. In Mississippi there have been 10 confirmed swine flu deaths since July 22, 2009; two of these deaths occurred in children.

Vaccination is the best defense against this form of influenza. The swine flu vaccine is made in the same way as the seasonal influenza vaccine that is given to hundreds of thousands of people every year. It has been thoroughly tested, and the risk from receiving the vaccine is much less than the risk from becoming ill with swine flu.

The vaccine will be given at your child's school soon and the school will let you know the dates or dates the vaccine will be administered. Enclosed you will find a sheet that explains the swine flu vaccine and a form for you to consent to your child receiving the swine flu vaccine.

Please read this material and complete the vaccine administration record indicating whether you want your child to receive the vaccine. Return the vaccine administration record to school within the next 3 days. Your child will not receive the swine flu vaccination unless you complete and sign the form, and return it to the school by the indicated date.

Sincerely,

Mary Currier, MD, MPH
State Epidemiologist