



NEWS RELEASE

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Flu Vaccine Update: CDC Allocation Plan

In response to the unanticipated flu vaccine shortage for the 2004-2005 flu season, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Aventis Pasteur have announced a plan to distribute 22.4 million doses of unshipped vaccine in phases to identified areas of need throughout the United States.

In the next 6-8 weeks, about 14.2 million vaccine doses will be distributed under Aventis Pasteur contracts to high-priority vaccine providers, including hospitals, long-term care facilities, nursing homes, and private providers caring for young children.

According to CDC Director, Dr. Julie Gerberding, "this plan will help ensure that vaccine gets to those people who need it most...this is a troubling, frustrating situation for all of us and we need for all Americans to pull together in the weeks to come to meet this challenge head on. This plan is the result of unprecedented collaboration between CDC, Aventis Pasteur, and state and local health departments across the country. And we must not forget the other public health heroes on the front lines in grocery stores, pharmacies, and health clinics working to prioritize vaccine."

The CDC will work with Aventis Pasteur and state and local health departments to identify people, by region, on the vaccination priority list. Approximately 8.2 million doses remaining after the first distribution phase will be shipped to other high-need areas.

The CDC also announced priority groups for vaccination with inactivated influenza vaccine:

- ❖ All children aged 6-23 months
- ❖ Adults aged 65 years and older
- ❖ Persons aged 2-64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions
- ❖ All women who will be pregnant during influenza season
- ❖ Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities
- ❖ Children 6 months -18 years of age on chronic aspirin therapy
- ❖ Health-care workers with direct patient care, and
- ❖ Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged <6 months.

Flu season peaks in the United States between December and March. Vaccination is the best protection against influenza; other precautions to help prevent spread of flu include avoiding close contact with infected people, covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and cleaning hands thoroughly and often.

PDM Healthcare is exploring all feasible avenues to locate flu vaccines for our members and will immediately inform members when additional flu shots become available. In the meantime, PDM advises members to be astute when purchasing flu vaccine from alternate sources and monitor product quality and price accuracy.

For more information, please contact your PDM Customer Care Representative at 440.871.1721.

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