

To Lung Transplant Recipients:

As you are all aware, this year's seasonal influenza season is upon us. In addition, H1N1 influenza continues to circulate in the community. We wanted to be sure to notify you of our initial recommendations concerning vaccination:

- As always, we recommend that you receive an injectable form of the seasonal influenza vaccine.
- It is currently available to high risk groups in the community and we would recommend you obtain a seasonal flu vaccine as soon as possible.
- Data available to the CDC suggest one vaccination, even when given this early in the season, should cover individuals throughout the whole season. Data are less clear among those patients who are chronically immunosuppressed. As a result, the transplant program has not fully decided whether we will recommend repeat vaccination later in the year for our patients. We will post further information once we decide whether a second vaccine is a good idea.
- We recommend that all of our patients receive the injectable H1N1 vaccination when it becomes available. At this time, it is estimated that it will be available in mid October. Full details regarding how vaccination will occur remain unknown at this time. We will keep you posted.

As with all influenza infections, prevention is always a good policy. There are simple measures we can all do to prevent or reduce the spread of influenza:

1. Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, then cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder and not into your hands.
3. If you become ill, stay home until you are without fever for 24 hours without taking medicines that reduce fever (such as Tylenol or aspirin).

Patients who are immunosuppressed are at higher risk to develop complications from influenza. You should notify your transplant coordinator so that we may consider treatment if you have:

- Fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, and/or acute diarrheal illness
- Close contact with a person who is suspected of having H1N1 influenza

In addition, **if** you develop any of the following symptoms you should seek immediate medical attention either by notifying the Transplant Center or calling 911:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion or change in level of consciousness
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Severe sore throat, accompanied by swollen glands in your neck
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then reoccur with fever and worse cough
- Fever over 104 degrees that cannot be brought down
- Fever of 101 degrees lasting for more than three days

Information regarding this year's influenza recommendations is being updated daily by the CDC and local health authorities. We will do all that we can to keep you informed of changes in these recommendations. We have plans to update our Web site with information regarding influenza. In addition, you can see updated information on the Minnesota Department of Health website.

[www.uofmtransplant.org](http://www.uofmtransplant.org)  
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/flu/index.html>

The Lung Transplant Team