



Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor, City of New York
Salvatore J. Cassano, Fire Commissioner

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HEALTH CONNECTIONS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BUREAU OF HEALTH SERVICES • COUNSELING SERVICES UNIT • FDNY

BIOPOD: 2010



This year's FDNY BIO-POD will be held on Friday, November 12th. The event will be held from 0600 hours to 2400 hours and will incorporate 17 sites for distribution of the season-

al flu vaccine to all on duty members. This exercise is part of the FDNY's biological preparedness program. In the event of a biological exposure, our department must respond quickly to provide needed protection for our members, on and off duty.

The 17 sites have been chosen to ensure that on duty members can move through each location in a minimal time so that essential Fire and EMS services are not impacted.

BIO POD HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ All on-duty members directed to 17 POD sites to be offered flu vaccine. This represents

MORE POD sites to ensure that all members can easily access the vaccine.

- ◆ Event includes civilian evacuation program for 9 Metro Tech, while offering flu vaccine to civilian members and uniformed members at headquarters.
- ◆ The city wide telephone recall program will be activated to inform members about the exercise while testing the telephone recall system for uniformed members.
- ◆ The sites remain available to all off duty members who wish to receive this vaccine at any of our locations

FDNY*BHS
 9 MetroTech Center, Brooklyn
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INFLUENZA VACCINE 2010

For the 2010 fall season, the flu vaccine is a trivalent vaccine, offering protection against 3 strains of the flu. It is not a live vaccine. The current vaccine incorporates the H1N1 strain to offer protection against the “swine flu” as well as two other strains of flu. It is believed that once again the H1N1 strain will be the pre-dominant flu “bug” this year.

Again this year it is recommended that all members take the flu vaccine. It remains the best way to protect yourself, your families and your co-workers against the flu.

The flu season remains unpredictable in its timing, its severity, its length, and which strains of influenza will dominate. The flu vaccine offers three strains that represent the “best guess” of the circulating flu strains seen in other parts of the world.

Most times, seasonal flu will hit us in January and February. That’s why we vaccinate to protect people before the flu season strikes. The flu vaccine can be 70% – 90 % effective against the flu. Even if there is not a good match of the virus to the vaccine, there is increased protection against the flu.

Although, the influenza illness may not be severe in the healthy individual, it can be life-threatening to individuals with underlying medical problems, chronic illnesses, and immune issues and to the young, the elderly and pregnant women. When you protect yourself, you protect those that you work with and your families.



PROTECTION AGAINST MRSA

Studies have shown that after a person has the flu bug they are more susceptible to other infections due to debilitated physical health. These secondary infections can include bacterial pneumonia as well as Staph infections, such as MRSA. Currently there is no vaccine against MRSA, but keeping yourself healthy, keeping skin barriers intact and keeping skin surfaces clean remain important in staying healthy. Again the flu vaccine remains the best protection against the seasonal flu. The additional benefits include remaining healthy so that you do not spread illness to your family and co-workers, AND you do not pick up another bug when you are run down after the flu.

If you are off duty on the day of this event, you can come down to one of our 17 sites. If you can’t make it that day, you can get this vaccine at the day of your Annual

Medical exam or any day you visit BHS.

CATCH UP ON YOUR VACCINATIONS AT BHS

The annual medical examination has been reset for a 12 month interval. When you come to BHS for this exam, you can catch up on needed vaccinations.

Tetanus vaccination is suggested every 10 years. This offers protection when faced with a cut or wound against tetanus, which can cause lockjaw.

But the new enhanced Tdap (Tetanus diphtheria acellular pertussis) offers additional protection against pertussis or “whooping cough”. This infection can be easily spread in close quarters and in families. Our childhood immunity to this disease wanes as time goes by. This safe vaccine enhances our immunity to this illness as well as diphtheria and tetanus. This vaccine is required for school age children entering the 7th grade. It is recommended for the adult population who need a tetanus shot as the enhanced protection will protect against this common respiratory infection.

Pneumovax is also offered for members who have underlying health issues such as asthma, recurrent respiratory conditions (seasonal bronchitis, recurrent pneumonia), and diabetes. This is a vaccine that offers protection against 23 strains of pneumococcal pneumonia. It is also recommended for members who smoke.