Maynard Citizens Corp / Medical Reserve Corps Newsletter

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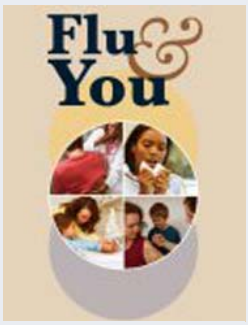


The 2010–2011 Influenza Season

How are the viruses selected to make flu vaccine?

The viruses used in making seasonal flu vaccines are chosen each year based on information collected over the previous year about which influenza viruses are spreading and what vaccine viruses would offer the best protection against circulating viruses.

The seasonal flu vaccine is usually a trivalent vaccine (a three component vaccine) with each component selected to protect against one of the three groups of influenza viruses circulating most commonly in humans. (The 2009 H1N1 vaccine that was made to protect against the pandemic virus first detected in April was a monovalent (one-component) vaccine that only protected against the 2009 H1N1 viruses.)

The three vaccine viruses are chosen to maximize the likelihood that the main circulating viruses during the upcoming flu season will be well covered by the vaccine. WHO recommends specific vaccine viruses for vaccine production, but then each individual country makes their own decision for licensing of vaccines in their country. In the United States, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) determines what viruses will be used in U.S.–licensed vaccines.

How can I protect my child against flu?

To protect against the flu, the first and most important thing you can do is to get a flu vaccine for yourself and your child. Vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months and older. While everyone should get a flu vaccine each flu season, it's especially important that young children and children with long term health conditions get vaccinated. (See list of conditions under "How Serious is Flu?") Also, caregivers of children with health conditions or children younger than 6 months old should get vaccinated. (Babies younger than 6 months are too young to be vaccinated themselves.) Another way to protect babies is to vaccinate pregnant women because research shows that this gives some protection to the baby both while the woman is pregnant and for a few months after the baby is born. A new flu vaccine is made each year to protect against the three flu viruses that research indicates are most likely to cause illness during the next flu season. This season's vaccine protects against the H1N1 virus that caused so much illness last season, an influenza A H3N2 virus, and an influenza B virus. This season's flu vaccine is being made using the same safety and production methods and in the same dose as past flu vaccines. Over the years, millions of flu vaccines have been given in the United

States. Flu vaccines have a very good safety record.

Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home if you are sick for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. This is to keep from infecting others and spreading the virus further.

Who Should Not Be Vaccinated

There are some people who should not get a flu vaccine without first consulting a physician. These include:

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs.
- People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination.
- People who developed Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of getting an influenza vaccine.
- Children less than 6 months of age (influenza vaccine is not approved for this age group), and
- People who have a moderate-to-severe illness with a fever (they should wait until they recover to get vaccinated.)

Fall and Winter Preparations:

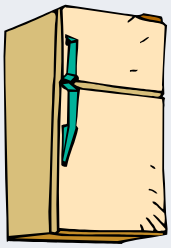
Power Failures

Humankind spent a lot of its history without electricity, so you'd think we'd be fine roughing it for a day or two. Unfortunately, the reality is we're quite dependent on electricity for some very basic needs. Forget the cell phone or the computer -- the safety of our food and water depends on a stable energy supply. Knowing how to stay safe during a power failure is essential in our modern world.

Refrigeration

Frozen and refrigerated food should be fine in any power failure lasting less than two hours. Some precautions may need to be taken if the power failure is expected to last more than two hours.

If the power goes out, a full freezer should still keep food frozen for 48 hours, and a half-full freezer should last 24 hours. These estimates are shortened if the door is



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opened, and the more the door is opened, the less effective the freezer will be.

Non frozen perishables must be kept below 40 degrees Fahrenheit at all times. Without opening the door, the typical refrigerator should keep food cold for about four hours during a power failure. If the power is anticipated to be out longer than four hours, all eggs, dairy, meat, and fish should be packed into a cooler with ice. A digital, quick-read thermometer can be used to determine if food is cold enough. Discard any food warmer than 40 degrees.

Water Safety

Water purification system may not operate in a power failure. Your local water utility should be able to tell you if water safety will be affected. The American Red Cross suggests the average person requires a gallon of water per day -- half to drink and half for other uses. One and a half gallons will be needed on hot days (see summer tips below).

The best bet is to store bottled water for use in an emergency. If bottled water is not available, tap water can be used if boiled for at least one minute. Using other methods to purify water is not as effective. Remember, if chemical means are used to purify water, parasitic organisms are probably not removed.

Staying Connected

Most cordless phones will not work during a power failure. Regular, landline telephones -- those that use only a phone line and do not require a power cord or batteries -- will continue to operate during most power failures. Cell phones may or may not function properly. Cell phone systems also have a tendency to overload during a power failure because of overuse. Keep at least one regular, old-fashion phone in the house for power failures.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Burning wood or charcoal for heat or cooking is a major source of carbon monoxide. Diesel or gasoline generators also produce carbon monoxide. Neither of these should be done in a closed shelter. Only burn wood in a proper fireplace or wood stove. Charcoal should never be burned inside the house or garage.

Never use stoves or ovens to heat a home. Carbon monoxide is formed when gas is burned in this manner and could lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.

What Your MCC/MRC Volunteers Have Been Doing Lately

Many volunteers from the MCC/MRC have been spending some of their time helping others in Maynard. Some of the events that they have participated in this year include:

Relay for Life (Volunteers were at the event for 18 hrs to assist the participants)

Maynard Road Race (Stationed at water stops and at the end of the race)

Maynard Farmers Market (Held an information booth at the market)

MaynardFest (Held an information booth at the fest)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Are you looking for a way to help your community? Joining Maynard's Citizen Corps/ Medical Reserve Corps could be the right opportunity. You would be working with friends and neighbors who are also volunteering their time, skills and interests to help Maynard be prepared to respond to a natural or man made emergencies.

It is not necessary to have a medical background. For every medical professional three non medical volunteers are needed.

A few examples of what citizen volunteers can do include:

Serve as volunteer at our local Flu Clinics

Establish and maintain records

Assist with communication, security and transportation

Participate in the education of all citizens regarding emergency preparedness

Your interest is your best qualification. Training is available.

For more information Maynard Board of Health 978 897 1002 or Mary Hilli at mrc@townofmaynard.net

Calendar of Events

October 14	Board Meeting	Town Hall 6:30 PM
October 19	Flu Preparation Meeting	Town Hall 6:30 PM
October 23	Flu Clinic	Fowler School 10-1
November 3	CPR Training	Town Hall 6-9 PM
November 4	Board Meeting	Town Hall 6:30 PM
November 18	ICS100 and 700 Training	Fowler 6-8:30 PM