

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Health Department observes National Influenza Vaccination Week,
announces walk-in vaccine availability**

(Lawrence, KS) – The observance of National Influenza Vaccination Week (Jan. 10-16) reminds the public of the importance of immunization against both seasonal and H1N1 influenza.

Although flu is unpredictable and the likelihood of a future wave of 2009 H1N1 influenza is unknown, we do know that vaccination is the single best defense against the illness.

Beginning Wednesday, Jan. 13, the H1N1 vaccine will be available during the department's regular walk-in clinic hours and over the lunch hour between noon and 1 p.m. For hours, visit www.ldchealth.org.

A special H1N1 vaccination clinic also will take place today, Jan. 12 at the Health Department, 200 Maine St. in Lawrence. The H1N1 vaccine is given at no charge by the Health Department and is available to anyone who wants protection from the virus.

Children under 10, who have received their first dose of the H1N1 vaccine, are urged to receive their second booster immunization. A period of one month must have passed between the child's first and second doses.

To help expedite the process, clients planning to be immunized at the Health Department are encouraged to download a consent form at www.ldchealth.org, fill it out ahead of time and bring when vaccinated. A second consent form must be filled out for children receiving their second dose.

Seasonal flu vaccine is also available for \$22 for children 6 months to 35 months and \$26 for people 3 years and older. Clients eligible for Medicare Part-B, Medicaid, HealthWave and Blue Cross/Blue Shield, (who bring their cards) will have their insurance billed.

Now is also the time to continue practicing healthy habits.

Good health habits are an important way to prevent both seasonal and H1N1 influenza:

- *Wash your hands.*

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

- *Cover coughs or sneezes.*

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

- *Stay home if you are sick.*

Stay home from work, school and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

- *Avoid close contact.*

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

- *Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.*

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.