

H1N1 wave ends; no sign of seasonal flu

Regular strain may still hit us: MD

By: Larry Kusch



12/02/2010 1:00 AM

[Enlarge Image](#)

DAVID LIPNOWSKI / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS (October 28, 2009) Chief provincial public health officer Dr. Joel Kettner (right) and Manitoba Health and Healthy Living Gerry Delorme answered question from the media at the Legislature building Wednesday afternoon. close cut closecut

All is quiet on the Manitoba flu front.

The second wave of H1N1 flu has quietly come to an end, and so far there have been no signs of seasonal influenza in the province, according to Dr. Joel Kettner, Manitoba's chief public health officer.

Related Items

1. ARTICLES

- o [Virus sends more people to hospital](#)
- o [H1N1 sick days decline](#)

Whether there will be a third wave of H1N1 is anybody's guess, he said, but provincial officials are certainly not ruling it out. "I think it's still a bit of a guessing game as to what this pandemic H1N1 is going to do in the future," Kettner said Thursday.

Although the seasonal flu has yet to take hold this year -- as it usually does by now -- it's much too early to say Manitobans have dodged a bullet, Kettner said.

Seasonal flu viruses could still raise their ugly heads between now and April. "It could be a quieter-than-average year for other flu types, but I think it's too early to say that," he said.

The H1N1 virus may have supplanted the seasonal flu strains this year, but no one knows for sure. "It's also very common to see two or three different types of viruses circulating in a winter season," Kettner pointed out.

Over the last four weeks, there has only been one new confirmed new case of H1N1 flu in Manitoba. Fewer than two dozen new cases have been recorded since the end of last year.

The province has hundreds of thousands of doses of H1N1 flu vaccine it may never use. Health officials have considered -- in conjunction with national authorities -- selling or donating the vaccine to other countries that may need it.

A lot depends on whether health authorities decide to incorporate H1N1 protection in next year's seasonal flu shot. If that happens, there will be less need for a continued stockpile of H1N1 vaccine.

Health officials are also unsure how long the H1N1 vaccine will protect those who have received it. Nor are they sure of its shelf life, although it's believed the stocks on hand will be "very usable and effective for next flu season," Kettner said.

If protection is wearing off and everybody who got the H1N1 shot last time wants it again, Manitoba will use up all its supplies, he said.

Meanwhile, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority continues to provide H1N1 vaccination clinics. The schedule is available on the health authority's website (at www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/a-z/influenza/clinics.php).

On Tuesday, Winnipeggers can get an H1N1 shot at the Isaac Brock Community Centre, 715 Telfer St., from 2 to 6 p.m. or at Seven Oaks Health & Social Services Centre, 3-1050 Leila Ave., from 4 to 8 p.m.

larry.kusch@freepress.mb.ca

H1N1 in Manitoba

Zero

Number of new lab-confirmed cases of H1N1 in the past week.

7

The number since Jan. 5.

1,774

Number of lab-confirmed cases since the start of the second wave of H1N1, beginning Oct. 6, 2009.

833

Number of lab-confirmed cases in people age 17 and under. 915 cases were age 18-64; 26 were 65 and over.

Four

Number of deaths in the second wave, compared to seven in the first wave, April 21-Oct. 5, 2009.

456,000

Number of Manitobans vaccinated to date, up 1,000 from last week.

One-million-plus

Number of doses of vaccine ordered by the province.

360,000

Number of doses in the provincial stockpile. The remainder are being stored by First Nations, regional health authorities and 177 doctors' offices.