

The Ulster County Health Department will hold its annual influenza and pneumococcal vaccination clinics at several locations throughout the county beginning on Tuesday, October 30, 2007. No appointments are necessary, and county residents may attend any site which is convenient.

The sites, dates and times for the clinics are attached.

County residents who are at greatest risk for influenza-related conditions are encouraged to receive the flu vaccination. This high-risk group includes those over the age of 50, as well as adults aged 18 and over who have heart disease, chronic broncho-pulmonary disease, renal disease, diabetes mellitus, other chronic metabolic disorders, severe anemia and/or compromised immune function, and others who are at risk of influenza-related conditions. Influenza vaccine is also recommended for home care providers and others (including household members) who may be in close contact with high-risk individuals.

**Senior citizens who have Medicare Part B benefits will be able to obtain their vaccinations through Medicare. The recipient must be entitled to Part B coverage on the date of service, Medicare Part B must be the primary insurance coverage, and the Medicare Card must be presented on the date of service.** For those not eligible for Medicare Part B coverage, there will be a \$20.00 charge for influenza vaccination and a \$35.00 charge for pneumococcal vaccination, payable at the clinic. County residents enrolled in Medicare Managed Care programs should consult with their primary care physician prior to presenting at one of the Health Department's sites.

Influenza, commonly known as the "flu," is a highly contagious disease. Its symptoms include fever, chills, headache, sore throat, runny nose and body aches. While most people fully recover from the flu in two to seven days, older adults are particularly vulnerable to dangerous complications, such as pneumonia, that may develop after infection with the flu.

Influenza vaccine is composed of killed influenza virus, so those who receive the immunization cannot get influenza from the vaccine. The 2007 - 2008 vaccine which will be administered contains A/Wisconsin, A/Solomon Islands, B/Malaysia- like antigens. Individuals who were immunized last year are **NOT** protected against this year's type, and should receive the new vaccine.

For recorded information about dates and times, please call the Ulster County Health Department Flu Hotline at **340-3093**.