

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CONTACT: Mary Havell

202-715-3459

mhavell@lungusa.org

**Influenza and H1N1: ALERT for People with Lung Disease and Their Caregivers
People with Lung Disease at Higher Flu Risk – Advised to Get Vaccinated and Watch for Signs of Illness**

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 16, 2009— People with lung disease like asthma and COPD are at particular risk to develop serious symptoms from both seasonal flu and H1N1 (swine) flu. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) more than half of adults hospitalized with the H1N1 strain of influenza had conditions such as asthma and chronic lung diseases. **CONTACT YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER IF YOU FEEL THE ONSET OF FLU SYMPTOMS AND SUFFER FROM LUNG DISEASE.** You should be especially alert to changes in your breathing.

If you do become sick with the flu, continue taking your normal medications, unless your health care provider makes other or additional recommendations. **KEEP THE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES AND CONTACT THEM AS SOON AS SYMPTOMS START SO THAT THEY CAN DECIDE ABOUT USE OF ANTI-FLU MEDICATION.** As always, maintain a list of all medications you take as well as the dosages and frequency.

Remember these tips to protect *your* health and prevent *spread* of the flu:

- Get vaccinated for both the seasonal flu and H1N1 flu.
- Remember to cover your nose and mouth with your arm when you cough or sneeze.
- **FREQUENTLY WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER.**
- **ALCOHOL-BASED HAND CLEANERS ARE EFFECTIVE WHEN WASHING IS NOT POSSIBLE.**
- Avoid large crowds if possible. Ask family and friends to be mindful of your higher risk and not expose you to their sickness if they are ill.
- The CDC recommends staying home if you have flu like symptoms for 7 days or until you are clear of symptoms for 24 hours.
- Always watch for public health advisories, as these recommendations may change.

For those with asthma, please remember to refer to and maintain your Asthma Action Plan as necessary. The American Lung Association has a template you can download to create your Asthma Action Plan at:

<http://www.lungusa.org/atf/cf/%7B7A8D42C2-FCCA-4604-8ADE-7F5D5E762256%7D/AAP.PDF>.

Please note: There are two ways to receive flu vaccine - the flu shot and the nasal spray vaccine. People with chronic lung disease, such as asthma and COPD should not receive nasal spray flu vaccine.

For Related information about Influenza and H1N1 please visit:

www.lungusa.org

www.facesofinfluenza.org

www.flu.gov

About the American Lung Association

Now in its second century, the American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. With your generous support, the American Lung Association is “Fighting for Air” through research, education and advocacy. For more information about the American Lung Association, a Charity Navigator Four Star Charity and holder of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Guide Seal, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872) or visit www.lungusa.org.

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