



H1N1 Vaccinations: What Nurses Want You To Know

(NAPSA)—In the midst of the current bout of the H1N1 influenza and vaccinations, the American Nurses Association (ANA) is urging all Americans, especially all registered nurses, to lead by example by getting the H1N1 vaccine.

“As nurses, we have an ethical obligation to protect ourselves, our patients and our families from illness,” said ANA president Rebecca M. Patton, MSN, RN. “Vaccination is one simple step we can take to do that, and it’s even more critical during this H1N1 pandemic.”

Many health experts believe there is little ground for concern when it comes to the safety of the vaccine. For example, according to Anne Schuchat, M.D., assistant surgeon general and director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases of the CDC, “It’s important for people to know that the H1N1 influenza vaccine is being made exactly the same way that the seasonal influenza vaccines are made. One hundred million people get those every year, and we believe there’s a very strong safety record for them, including many, many pregnant women who get those vaccines every year and many, many children who get those vaccines every year.”

The ANA also has some tips for those caring for someone who has the 2009 strain of H1N1:

- **Rest.** People who are sick with influenza or any serious illness should rest at home. Not only is it important to avoid crowded places when you are sick to prevent spreading illness to others, your body needs all the energy it has to fight the illness and recover.

- **Drink plenty of fluids.** The body uses a lot of fluid to fight the illness, and you can become dehydrated very quickly when you are sick. Dehydration can cause serious harm, including breathing and heart problems. Avoid sugary and



Rebecca M. Patton, MSN, RN, president of the American Nurses Association, urges everyone to get seasonal influenza and H1N1 vaccinations—especially nurses so they can stay healthy on the job and care for their patients.

highly caffeinated drinks (even sports soft drinks) and stick to water, rehydration drinks like oral electrolyte solution, broth, tea and ice chips.

- **Stay away from others.** A sick person needs rest but should avoid close contact with others (when possible) to avoid spreading illness. If others must be around, try to keep them about six feet away from the sick person (germs from sneezing can travel up to six feet but not much more).

- **Wash hands.** Everyone should wash his or her hands frequently and especially before eating, but people who are sick should be extra careful to clean their hands or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.

The ANA is the only full-service organization representing the interests of the nation’s 2.9 million registered nurses.

To learn more about H1N1, visit the ANA Web site at www.NursingWorld.org/H1N1; for more information about ANA, visit www.NursingWorld.org.