



NEWS RELEASE
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October 11, 2007

Flu vaccine shipping to Army clinics now
Early vaccination efforts to focus on Soldier populations

HEIDELBERG, Germany – The influenza vaccine has arrived in Europe and is being distributed to Army medical clinics throughout Europe, according to Col. Theresa Moser, chief of the Force Health Protection Office, Europe Regional Medical Command. She has oversight of this year's immunization program.

The Europe Regional Medical Command has finalized plans to immunize personnel in an effort to minimize the effects of influenza during the coming winter months. Clinic commanders have been charged with focusing their early efforts on protecting the active-duty force by scheduling mass immunizations for units in their areas. Family members and other authorized beneficiaries will be offered influenza vaccine afterwards.

This year's goal is to immunize 95 percent of the Active Duty population by December 31. Members of the active force can expect to receive information from their units. Other beneficiaries should wait for announcements about local vaccination programs in their garrison newspapers and local AFN affiliates in the coming weeks.

Instead of the familiar injection, many in Europe will receive a nasal mist. Known commercially as FluMist®, this vaccine is recommended for most people aged 2-49. For those who should not receive the nasal mist, other forms of vaccination may be offered. The type of vaccine an individual receives will depend on age and contributing health factors, such as pregnancy or pre-existing allergies, says Col. William Corr, ERMC's preventive medicine consultant.

The Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta publishes guidelines for influenza vaccinations, and the Army will follow those guidelines in its annual campaign. For more general information on influenza and the benefits of receiving the annual vaccination, visit their web site at www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/.