Vaccine supply is plentiful.
Unlike the previous two seasons, this season there will be no vaccine delays and no need to postpone vaccination. “High risk” individuals should be vaccinated as soon as possible – this includes individuals at highest risk for influenza-related complications such as persons 65 years and older, those with chronic medical conditions, the immunocomprised, and pregnant women in their second or third trimester.

Information regarding the LAC Department of Health Services Public Health annual influenza campaign is available by calling 1-800-427-8700 and available at: http://lapublichealth.org/ip/flu/2002-2003.htm

Vaccination for children is encouraged.
Because of the high rates of influenza-related morbidity and mortality among children during the last influenza season, the CDC is now encouraging the vaccination of children; in fact, for the first time this season, infants aged 6 months to 24 months have been added to the list of those who may receive first priority vaccination.

Be on guard for type B influenza.
While type A influenza strains are typically more prevalent than type B, there has been an especially high proportion of type B influenza within LAC for the past two influenza seasons. This trend may continue this season as well. The type of influenza strain is important since some rapid tests and antiviral medications are only effective in the identification and treatment of type A strains. Descriptions of differing testing procedures and antiviral medications are available on the CDC website at: http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/fluavirus.htm

Outbreaks of influenza and other respiratory illnesses are reportable under state law (California Code of Regulations 2500).
To report an outbreak, call the Communicable Disease Reporting System Hotline at 888-397-3993.