

## Swine Flu vaccine in jail

Posted: Oct 30, 2009 07:40 PM EDT

While most of us can't get the swine flu vaccine right now, almost all inmates at the Lee County Jail can. The Lee County Jail got so many Swine Flu vaccinations, it's being offered to most inmates.

"I think it's a disgrace that the people in jail get priority over us," said Liz Clement. Meanwhile, you and I can only get a shot if we're in a high priority group. On Monday, the jail will start doling out doses.

**Marisa Mendelson, Fox 4 News:** Some people would think that it's unfair that the inmates are getting these vaccines.

**Captain Tom Eberhardt, Corrections Bureau:** Well, that might be the case. As far as what we got, that was all up to the Health Department.

All the prisons in Florida have more than 100,000 inmates in the system, yet they got a total of 200 vaccines. Meanwhile, the Lee County Jail has 1,900 inmates and it got 1,000 vaccines.

"Who gave it to them," asked Liz Clement. "Who allowed that to happen?" Answer: The Lee County Health Department. Now 4 In Your Corner wants to know why.

"The jail had already received their dosages when we realized the allocations were not going to come in in the original time frame and the original quantities that we had thought," said Jennifer James-Mesloh of the Lee County Health Department. Now there's a shortage and people who aren't a "high priority" have to wait.

**Marisa Mendelson, Fox 4 News:** Since I don't fall into a high priority group, the only way for me to get a Swine Flu vaccine essentially would be to commit a crime, is that true?

**Jennifer James-Mesloh:** No, that's not true at all. Basically everyone will eventually have the opportunity to get vaccinated. What we're asking is those who are in the priority group to come first now.

That's not an issue for inmates because there are plenty of shots in the jail. For the rest of us, plan to wait until at least December. Unless of course, you get arrested.

Both the Charlotte and Collier County Jails requested vaccines for high risk inmates but they haven't received them yet.