

Long but fast-moving lines at swine flu clinic in Fort Myers

NEWS-PRESS.COM • NOVEMBER 2, 2009

4:44 P.M. — Those hoping to get free swine flu vaccinations this afternoon were greeted with long, though, fast-moving lines outside Fort Myers High School.

Both of the Lee County Health Department's free clinics at Fort Myers and Lehigh high schools run from 4 to 9 p.m. Lines here began forming about 2 p.m., shortly after school let out.

The health department currently has about 14,000 vaccine doses on hand, and additional shipments will continue to arrive in the coming days and weeks, said Jennifer James-Mesloh, department spokeswoman.

"What we're hoping for is a steady stream," James-Mesloh said.

This is the department's second round of vaccine clinics. On Thursday, the department estimated about 3,300 were vaccinated. Those figure was revised down to about 3,200, after a full count was completed. Ultimately, the department hopes to vaccinate as many as 200,000.

For now, only the department is asking that only those considered a high-risk for swine flu complications come in for inoculation. They include those between the ages of 6 months and 24 years, pregnant women and older people under the age of 65 with certain underlying health problems.

Among those in line this afternoon was Val Arnold, a 59-year-old with chronic lung disease. He said his decision to come was based on his concerns about the severity of the swine flu "and a letter from my doctor who said I'd be insane if I don't get a shot," he said.