

## Lee County received portion of recalled H1N1 vaccine doses

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The Health Department confirmed that Lee County received a portion of the 800,000 doses of the children's H1N1 vaccine recalled Tuesday.

Doses were recalled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention after researchers found the vaccine had lost its potency, according to an Associated Press report. All of the recalled doses, packaged in pre-filled syringes for children, were from the French manufacturer Sanofi Pasteur.

Jennifer James-Mesloh, spokesperson for the Lee County Health Department, said 400 doses of the recalled medicine was received locally and only 164 were administered. She said the county Health Department yanked the remaining 236 doses of the weakened vaccine.

"They are completely safe, there is no need for someone to be concerned that they will have any health problems," said James-Mesloh. "And they do not need to be re-administered."

Four lots or batches of the vaccine were in question, she said, and Lee County only received its supplies from one of those lots.

"There was a slight drop in the antigen content, not enough for the vaccine not to be effective," she said. "What the CDC is stressing is that there is no need to re-administer."

Children under the age of 9 need a second dose of the vaccine as a booster 21 days after their first shot. There were 6,000 children in Lee County who fell into this category, according to the Health Department.

Lee County children who received an H1N1 vaccine from the Health Department received a immunization card with the lot number and manufacturer. Those wondering whether the vaccine they received was recalled can consult the card.

According to the Associated Press, all of the vaccines passed potency tests before shipment but at some point weakened for reasons that doctors are uncertain of at this point.

James-Mesloh couldn't say whether vaccines from private doctors were also recalled.

Losing the 236 doses shouldn't have any affect on local immunizations, she added. Shipments of the vaccine arrive in Lee County on a weekly basis and free vaccines are still being offered at the Health Department's office on 83 Pondella Road.

"We don't pay for them or anything like that," said James-Mesloh. "It isn't going to impact our ability to vaccinate people in Lee County."

Dr. Margaret Lewin, medical director of the Miami-based Cinergy Health, said the recall isn't a safety issue. The 800,000 recalled Tuesday are out of 85 million doses that have already been distributed.

"Knowledgeable people don't feel it will make any difference," said Lewin. "What gratifies me frankly is that they watch this so closely."

The H1N1 vaccine campaign will continue into the spring, she said. Experts are expecting a second peak of H1N1 infections to occur in the spring.