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[Next Post »](#)

Doctor to share surplus swine flu shots with the county

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Dr. Steven Abelowitz, the South County pediatrician who received **a surplus of H1N1** vaccine shots last week, said he will give a supply of 2,000 shots to the county's Health Care Agency today.

"I think there's a need for it and the county will distribute to other practitioners," Abelowitz said.

Abelowitz opened up vaccination appointments to non-patients who fall within the guidelines after receiving 12,000 shots in two days from the state's distributor. His office has been overwhelmed by the demand, even as other doctors have questioned why he received so much.

Orange County as a whole has received about 240,000 vaccines, far short of the 1.6 million needed for every resident who falls into a target group based on age, health status or occupation.

Some searching for the vaccine were thrilled to find it through Abelowitz, but others were frustrated because they don't have enough for their patients.

"This is such a travesty," said Kim Holford, who manages a pediatric office in Long Beach that treats a high percentage of chronically ill kids. "It's just unbelievable."

In other swine flu related developments, the Health Care Agency released an updated composite of the 32 people who have died of swine flu complications.

Median age: 50

Pregnant women: 3

Children: 4

Underlying conditions: In one death, presence of underlying conditions was unknown. For the remaining 31, two were obese, which is not officially considered an underlying condition, but has been linked to a **higher death rate in a state study**. Five out of the 31 had no conditions that are considered risk factors for complications.

Examples of underlying health problems include: diabetes, cancer, heart, lung, kidney and autoimmune conditions.

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