

Panel urges some swine flu vaccine next month

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(AP) -- The government should speed availability of at least a little swine flu vaccine next month instead of in October, the president's scientific advisers recommended Monday.

The report also urges that federal health officials do more social networking to put the young people targeted by the virus on notice; clarify who should use anti-flu drugs and how; and improve tracking of the fast-moving virus.

The Obama administration said it already is taking many of the steps recommended in the 68-page report from the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, a group of leading scientists. For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expects to issue revised [flu](#) treatment guidelines by month's end. It reports over 300,000 followers of its emergency Twitter, up from 30,000 when [swine flu](#) first struck in the spring.

The vaccine issue is tougher. The council recommended that manufacturers begin packaging bulk vaccine into vials and syringes immediately so some could be available in September for those at high-risk, rather than awaiting the results of studies under way to settle dosing and other questions. The government already has asked all five manufacturers to bottle its doses as soon as they're ready "to assure the earliest possible availability," says a White House progress update.

But just last week, health officials announced a delay with swine flu

vaccine production for a number of reasons, including a logjam at those packaging factories. While the government initially expected to launch swine flu vaccinations with 120 million available doses around Oct. 15, it now estimates it will have just 45 million doses on hand then - with about 20 million more shipped each week through December.

There's plenty of [vaccine](#) against regular winter flu, which also is expected to circulate, and clinics and retailers have begun those inoculations.

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