

Employee Flu Vaccination Campaign

Facts about Vaccinating Health Care Personnel and the Impact of Influenza in a Health Care Setting

Health care personnel (HCP) are loosely defined as all paid and unpaid people working in health care settings, such as acute care, long-term care, skilled nursing facilities, rehabilitative centers, physicians' offices, urgent care centers and emergency medical services, and who have the potential for exposure to infectious material.

Interesting Vaccination Facts

- Health care facilities offer no-cost vaccination to their own regular full-time/part-time staff, and 66 percent of these facilities include visiting physicians, 50 percent include volunteers and their agencies, and 33 percent include medical students.
- Herd immunity is achieved when at least 80 percent of a population is vaccinated, and as a result, protects those who cannot be vaccinated.
- Vaccination of HCP may be considered a patient safety issue due to absenteeism and presenteeism (when employees are present at work but not functioning at capacity due to illness). Both affect the delivery of care.
- Low vaccination rates of HCP are often those under age 50 and health care aids.
- Studies show infectious disease physicians are the most respected and

have the greatest impact in influencing other HCP to receive flu vaccinations, though pediatricians usually achieve the highest rates.

- The higher one's education, the higher his or her immunization rates.
- It is shown that 11 absentee days are averted for every 100 HCPs who receive the vaccine.

Interesting Influenza (Flu) Facts

- Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccination each year.
- Every year in the United States, on average 5-20 percent of the population gets the flu; more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications; and about 36,000 people die from flu-related causes.
- Anyone, including healthy people, can get the flu and serious complications from influenza can occur at any age. However, people age 65 years and older, those with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women and young children are more likely to experience complications from influenza.

- Pneumonia, bronchitis and sinus/ear infections are three examples of complications from the flu.
- 83 percent of working adults admit to working while they had flu-like illness.
- The average healthy adult loses approximately one to four days from work for each flu-like illness episode.
- 50 percent of influenza infections may be asymptomatic.
- Adults develop peak antibodies two weeks after vaccination.
- Flu is the sixth leading cause of death of adults in the United States.
- Influenza vaccine is less effective in the elderly, but it does reduce the severity of illness, the incidence of complications by 50-60 percent and deaths by 80 percent.
- The flu can worsen chronic health problems. For example, the flu may trigger people with asthma to experience asthma attacks or people with congestive heart failure to experience more severe symptoms of the condition.

Symptoms of Flu

Symptoms of flu include:

- fever (usually high)
- headache
- extreme fatigue
- dry cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- muscle aches
- stomach symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, though more common in children

Prevent Seasonal Flu: Get Vaccinated

The single best way to prevent the flu is to get a flu vaccination each year. There are two types of vaccines:

- The flu shot, which is an inactivated vaccine containing killed virus, that is given with a needle. The flu shot is approved for those who are 6 months and older, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions.
- The nasal-spray flu vaccine, which is a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that do not cause the flu. (*It is also sometimes called LAIV or "Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine."*) It is approved for use in healthy people 2-49 years old who are not pregnant.

About two weeks after vaccination, antibodies develop that protect against influenza virus infection.

Flu vaccines will not protect against flu-like illnesses caused by non-influenza viruses.

Transmission

Person-to-Person

- Influenza viruses are mostly spread from person-to-person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. (This is called "droplet spread.") When droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air, they are sometimes deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby.
- Influenza viruses may also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on an infected person or object, and then touches his or her own or someone else's mouth or nose.
- Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning one day before

symptoms develop and up to five days after becoming sick.

- Children may pass the virus for longer than seven days.
- Symptoms start one to four days after the virus enters the body. Some people may be infected with the flu virus but have no symptoms. During this time, those people can still spread the virus to others.
- Vaccinating long-term care personnel prevents five deaths, two admissions to hospitals due to flu-like illnesses, seven physician consultations and nine cases of flu-like illnesses per 100 residents.
- It is document that vaccinated HCP suffer 25 percent fewer upper respiratory infections, use 43 percent fewer sick days and make 44 percent fewer visits to their health care providers.

Examples of Reasons Why the Vaccine was ACCEPTED

- Self-protection
- Protect patients
- Protect family members
- Previously received the vaccine
- Belief in effectiveness of vaccine
- Desire to avoid missing work
- Peer recommendations
- Personal physician recommendation
- Strong worksite recommendation
- Previously suffered from flu
- Belief it is a professional responsibility
- Access and convenience
- Free

Examples of Reasons Why the Vaccine was DECLINED

- Fear of getting sick from flu (from the vaccine)
- Fear of vaccine side effects
- Perceived ineffectiveness
- Perceived low or no likelihood of getting flu
- Fear of needles
- Insufficient time, inconvenient or forgetting to get vaccine
- Belief in homeopathic medications
- Belief that own host defenses will protect against flu
- Belief other preventative measures minimize risk
- Lack of personal physician recommendation
- Belief flu is not severe
- Cost
- Young age