

Attention Health-care Workers! Annual Influenza Vaccination Now Recommended for All Health-care Workers¹

- The CDC recommends yearly influenza immunizations for **physicians, nurses, paramedics, emergency-service workers, technicians, outpatient-care workers, home-care workers, and other employees of hospitals, nursing homes, assisted-living or chronic-care facilities who have contact with patients, and people who live or care for individuals at high risk.**¹
- Effective January 1, 2007, The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations issued the approval of an infection control standard that requires accredited organizations, such as those that follow the Critical Access Hospitals, Hospitals, and Long Term Care Accreditation programs, **to offer influenza vaccinations to staff, which includes volunteers and licensed independent practitioners with close patient contact.**⁴
- Annual influenza immunization for health-care workers is also recommended by both the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) to help protect staff, patients, and family members, and to decrease work absenteeism. These recommendations include educating health-care workers on the benefits of vaccination and the potential risks of influenza for both themselves and their patients. These vaccinations should be offered at the health-care workers' work site at no cost as a part of the employee health program.⁵

GET IMMUNIZED NOW!

Help prevent the spread of influenza by starting with YOU... Be sure to get your annual immunization this year.

References: 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prevention and control of influenza: recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), 2007. *MMWR*. 2007;56(RR-6):1-60. 2. LaVela SL, Smith B, Weaver FM, Legro MW, Goldstein B, Nichol K. Attitudes and practices regarding influenza vaccination among healthcare workers providing services to individuals with spinal cord injuries and disorders. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol*. 2004;25(11):933-940. 3. Manuel DG, Henry B, Hockin J, Naus M. Health behavior associated with influenza vaccination among healthcare workers in long-term-care facilities. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol*. 2002;23(10):609-614. 4. Surveillance, prevention, and control of infection. In: Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. *2007 Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals: The Official Handbook (CAMH)*. Oak Brook, IL: Joint Commission Resources; 2007: IC-1-IC-10b. 5. CDC. Influenza Vaccination of Health-care Personnel: Recommendations of the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). *MMWR*. 2006;55(RR-2):1-16.

Health-care Workers and the Risks of Influenza



**Find out why you need
an annual influenza vaccination
to protect yourself
and your patients!**

Did You Know That Health-care Workers Can Acquire *and* Transmit Influenza?

Health-care workers (HCWs) with direct patient contact are at risk of acquiring influenza from patients and transmitting the virus to persons at high risk of infection—such as the elderly, pregnant women, infants, and people of all ages with compromised health.¹

Since people can be infectious up to 1 day before symptoms appear, health-care workers can acquire or spread influenza without knowing it.¹

During an influenza outbreak in a health-care setting, as many as 70% of the staff and patients can become infected.²

Why *don't* health-care workers get immunized?

A recent study found that reluctance for vaccination among health-care workers is based primarily on concerns about adverse effects.²

It's not too late to benefit from immunization.

Since influenza season timing and duration vary every year, there is no specific time to be vaccinated for influenza. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that vaccinations should be offered throughout the influenza season.¹

Did You Know That *Only 2 Out of 5* HCWs Receive an Annual Influenza Immunization?

Approximately 42%, only 2 out of 5, of health-care workers in the United States receive an influenza immunization each year.¹

- Hospital-based influenza outbreaks frequently occur in institutions with unvaccinated health-care workers¹
- Vaccinating health-care workers against influenza is associated with fewer deaths among nursing-home residents¹



IT'S IMPORTANT to be vaccinated every year because the vaccine is updated annually to account for the viruses considered most likely to infect the population.¹

Why Is It So Important to Immunize *Yourself*?

Annual influenza vaccination of health-care workers helps:¹

- Protect health-care workers, their patients, and their communities
- Decrease death rates among nursing-home patients
- Reduce work absenteeism
- Reduce the incidence of hospital-based influenza outbreaks
- Improve the prevention of influenza-associated disease and enhance patient safety

According to a study of health-care workers, those who were vaccinated looked favorably on influenza immunization and believed in the effectiveness of the vaccine, while the group of unvaccinated health-care workers did not.³

