Make a Strong
Flu Vaccine Recommendation

FIGHT FLU

Information for Health Care Professionals

CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older get an influenza (flu) vaccine every year.

Your Vaccine Recommendation is Critical

As a health care professional (HCP), your strong recommendation is a critical factor in whether your patients get a flu vaccine. Research indicates that most adults are likely to get their flu vaccine if their doctor or health care professional recommends it to them. Most adults believe vaccines are important, but they need a reminder from you to get vaccinated.

Adults aged 50-64 Need a Flu Vaccine

There are currently 63 million people in the United States between the ages of 50 and 64. That represents one-fifth of the U.S. population. Flu vaccination can offer important protection for this age group.

- During the 2017-2018 flu season, adults aged 50-64 had the second highest rate of flu-associated hospitalization (112.9 per 100,000).
- About one-third of adults aged 50-64 have an underlying medical condition that puts them at higher risk for flu-related complications.
- Influenza vaccination prevents millions of illnesses and thousands of hospitalizations in adults aged 50-64. Increasing the number of adults in this age group who are vaccinated will further reduce the impact of influenza each year. For example, if 5% more people in the 50-64 age group had been vaccinated in the 2016-2017 flu season, an estimated 280,000 additional illnesses and 3,000 additional hospitalizations could have been prevented.

When to Vaccinate

- CDC recommends that vaccination should be offered by the end of October. However, vaccination should continue throughout flu season as long as flu viruses are circulating, even into January or later.
- If you do not offer vaccine at your facility, make a flu vaccine referral, and then follow up with each patient during subsequent appointments to ensure they got vaccinated. If the patient remains unvaccinated, repeat the recommendation/referral and try to identify and address any questions or concerns.

How to Make a Strong Flu Vaccine Recommendation

Based on years of research into vaccine motivators, CDC has developed a mnemonic device to help HCPs make a strong vaccine recommendation. This method known as "SHARE" can help you to make a strong vaccine recommendation and provide important information to help patients make informed decisions about vaccinations.

S- SHARE the reasons why the an influenza vaccine is right for the patient given his or her age, health status, lifestyle, occupation, or other risk factors. CDC recommends annual vaccination for everyone 6 months and older with any licensed, age-appropriate flu vaccine with no preference expressed for one vaccine over another.

> *"This vaccine can protect you and your family from getting sick from flu. By getting the vaccine today, you'll be protecting yourself and the people around you who may be more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like your children and parents."*

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

H- HIGHLIGHT positive experiences with influenza vaccines (personal or in your practice), as appropriate, to reinforce the benefits and strengthen confidence in flu vaccination.

Tell your patients that CDC and you recommend they get an influenza vaccine each year.

A- ADDRESS patients' questions and any concerns about influenza vaccines, including for example, side effects, safety, and vaccine effectiveness in plain and understandable language.

"A flu vaccine cannot cause flu infection. The most common side effects of an influenza vaccine are mild, like redness, swelling, soreness, or low-grade fever for a flu shot. This should go away within a few days."

R- REMIND patients that influenza vaccines protect them and their loves ones from serious flu illness and flu-related complications.

"Flu activity is going to start to pick up, and CDC says to expect more cases in the coming months. That is why I want to make sure I help protect you and your loved ones."

E- EXPLAIN the potential costs of getting flu, including serious health effects and time lost (such as missing work or family obligations).

"It's important to get vaccinated this season because flu vaccination can reduce potential flu illnesses, doctor visits, and missed work and school due to flu."

Types of Vaccinations Available

For the 2018-2019 flu season, providers may choose to administer any licensed, age-appropriate flu vaccine: injectable influenza vaccine (IIV3 or IIV4), recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV4), or live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV4):

Vaccine type	Vaccine description	Recommended for
Trivalent (3-component) Injectable Vaccine (IIV3)	Contains the influenza A(H1N1), (H3N2) and influenza B lineage viruses predicted to be most common	People 5 years and older
Quadrivalent (4-component) Injectable Vaccine (IIV4)	Contains the influenza A(H1N1), (H3N2) and two influenza B lineage viruses predicted to be most common	People 6 months and older
Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV)	Nasal spray flu vaccine; Contains the influenza A(H1N1), (H3N2) and two influenza B lineage viruses predicted to be most common	People 2 years through 49 years who are not pregnant
Adjuvanted Influenza Vaccine (aIIV3)	Designed to cause a stronger immune response, formulated with MF59 adjuvant; Contains the influenza A(H1N1), (H3N2) and influenza B viruses predicted to be most common	Adults 65 years and older
High-Dose Influenza Vaccine (HD-IIV3)	Designed to cause a stronger immune response, containing four times the antigen of a standard dose flu vaccine; Contains the influenza A(H1N1), (H3N2) and influenza B viruses predicted to be most common	Adults 65 years and older
Recombinant Influenza Vaccine (RIV4)	Produced without the use of the influenza virus or chicken eggs; Contains the influenza A(H1N1), (H3N2) and two influenza B lineage viruses predicted to be most common	Adults 18 years and older
Cell-Based Influenza Vaccine (ccIIV4)	Manufactured with cell-derived influenza A(H3N2) and B vaccine viruses; influenza A(H1N1) is egg-derived; Contains the influenza A(H1N1), (H3N2) and two influenza B lineage viruses predicted to be most common	People 4 years and older

For more information, visit: **www.cdc.gov/flu** or call **1-800-CDC-INFO**