

Business/Employers Influenza Toolkit

This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Hello, I'm Lisa Koonin, the Senior Advisor in the Influenza Coordination Unit at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Welcome to this CDC podcast for Businesses and Employers on the importance of promoting flu vaccination for your workforce.

Every year, influenza, or “the flu,” affects employers and businesses. Whether you're a large or small business, flu can be a big disruption. In the U.S., businesses spend approximately 10.4 billion dollars a year in direct costs for hospitalizations and outpatient visits for adults. Help reduce this price tag by encouraging your employees to get an annual flu vaccination. CDC recommends an annual flu vaccine as the first and *most* important step in protecting against the flu. This high-value, relatively low-cost service can create savings in two important ways: first by reducing absenteeism and also by reducing health care expenditures. Ultimately, a vaccinated workforce means healthier and more productive employees – now, *that* makes good business sense.

To help guide you, CDC has produced a Business and Employer's Toolkit entitled “Make it Your Business to Fight the Flu.” At the end of this podcast, I will give you some links to download this free resource to your own desktop. This Toolkit helps businesses and employers fight the flu by offering tips to consider when planning and responding to this season's flu.

CDC recommends two strategies for businesses and employers:

The first strategy is to host a flu vaccination clinic in your workplace. Employers frequently offer onsite seasonal flu vaccination at no or low cost to their employees. This option works well if the employer has an on-site occupational health clinic. Also, pharmacies and community vaccinators can be contracted to provide seasonal flu vaccination services on-site.

The second strategy is to promote flu vaccination in the community. Many health providers, pharmacies, or clinics offer seasonal flu vaccinations. Make sure *your* employees know where they and their family can go to get their seasonal flu vaccination. You can partner with a pharmacy or provider to get your employees vaccinated offsite.

CDC recommends that all people six months and older get vaccinated against the flu. Vaccination is especially important for people who are at higher risk of complications from the flu, including pregnant women, young children, people 65 and older, or those with underlying health disorders, like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease. Also, babies under the age of six months can't get vaccinated, so it's important that their parents and caretakers *are* vaccinated. While there are many different flu viruses, each season's flu vaccine protects against the three viruses that research suggests will be most common during flu season. Flu vaccine usually contains protection against the current season's influenza A H3N2 virus, influenza B virus, and influenza A H1N1 virus.

Remember: *Even healthy people can get the flu and it can be serious.*

As long as flu season isn't over, it's not too late to get vaccinated, even during the winter. Flu season most often peaks in January or February in the U.S. The workplace can serve as an important place for people to get vaccinated against flu each year. A recent CDC report showed that the workplace was the second most common place of vaccination for adults aged 18 to 64.

The Business and Employer's Toolkit provides you with practical strategies and free resources, including a variety of useful links, Web tools, flyers, brochures, and fact sheets. CDC encourages you to use these strategies and resources to protect the health and productivity of your workforce this flu season and beyond.

Make it your business to fight the flu.

Go to www.cdc.gov/flu/business to download your toolkit. To learn more about the flu, visit www.cdc.gov/flu and www.flu.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.