

Continue to Vaccinate Patients and Staff Against the Flu

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

The winter season can be a busy time for health care providers and their medical practices. Cold and flu season usually means lots of patients needing routine care, sick visits, and sometimes, emergency treatment. That makes *now* the perfect time to remind you about the importance of flu vaccines—for yourself, your colleagues, staff, and patients.

I'm Dr. Lisa Grohskopf from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It's not too late to get a flu vaccine. Flu activity is just picking up in the US and it's possible that we could continue to see significant flu activity until May.

Here are steps *you* can take to fight the flu:

First, set an example by getting your flu vaccine, and encourage your colleagues to get theirs. The risk of flu illness, among colleagues *and* patients, is reduced when everyone in the workplace gets vaccinated. Your flu vaccine also helps to protect you and your family when you're away from the office.

Second, research continues to show the powerful impact of a health care professional's recommendation in favor of vaccination. Your recommendation and your ability to say that *you've* gotten *your* flu vaccine go a long way with patients. Continue offering and encouraging flu vaccines throughout the flu season, especially to those patients at high risk for serious flu complications, including pregnant women, young children, those 65 and older, and patients with chronic health conditions, like asthma, diabetes, and heart disease.

It's also important for people living with or caring for high risk patients to be vaccinated. This includes people living with or caring for children younger than six months because they're too young to be vaccinated.

Providers caring for children should keep in mind that *some* children need two doses of flu vaccine to be fully protected. Usually, parents will need to be informed if and when their child needs a second dose.

Even if flu vaccines are not offered within your practice, or if you've run out, CDC would like to encourage you to recommend flu vaccination to your patients and refer them to an alternate flu vaccine provider.

Together, we can get even more people vaccinated against the flu and help reduce the burden of this serious disease.

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

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