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WEEKLY FLU NEWS

October 7, 2019



NIH forms new collaborative influenza vaccine research network

Sept. 30, 2019; [EurekaAlert!](#)

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, has initiated the Collaborative Influenza Vaccine Innovation Centers (CIVICs) program, a new network of research centers that will work together in a coordinated, multidisciplinary effort to develop more durable, broadly protective and longer-lasting influenza vaccines. NIAID will provide up to approximately \$51 million in total first-year funding for the program, which is designed to support the CIVICs program centers over seven years.



Only 52% of US adults plan to get flu vaccine, survey shows

Sept. 26, 2019; [Healio](#)

Although influenza vaccination rates have increased, new data released by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases indicated that barely half of U.S. adults plan to get vaccinated against influenza this season.

“Flu is serious. It’s a lot more than a few missed days from work from fever, body ache or just feeling lousy. ... It is a serious, potentially deadly illness,” HHS Secretary Alex M. Azar II said during the annual influenza and pneumococcal news conference co-hosted by the NFID and CDC.

Why the flu shot cannot give you the flu

Sept. 27, 2019; [Snopes](#)



Flu vaccination prevents millions of flu-related illnesses and deaths annually, but vaccination rates are low for many reasons.

During the 2018-2019 flu season, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that about 45% of U.S. adults received the flu vaccine. While this is an increase of 8% from 2017-2018, it falls way below the national goal of 70% of American adults receiving a flu shot.

One of the common myths that leads people to avoid the flu shot is that they think the shot will give them the flu. But that is simply not true. The virus in the vaccine is not active, and an inactive virus cannot transmit disease. What is true is that you may feel the effects of your body mounting an immune response, but that does not mean you have the flu.



Flu vaccine reduces risk for hospitalization in kids, death in adults

Oct. 4, 2019; [Healio](#)

Influenza vaccination reduced the risk for influenza-related hospitalization in children by nearly half and the odds of death in adults by about 36% over several recent influenza seasons, according to CDC data from two studies presented at IDWeek.

In the first study, Angela P. Campbell, MD, MPH, a medical officer in the CDC's Influenza Division, and colleagues assessed influenza vaccine effectiveness in preventing influenza-related hospitalizations among 3,441 children younger than age 18 years with acute respiratory illness who were enrolled at seven pediatric hospitals in the New Vaccine Surveillance Network.



Flu season is coming: here's how to protect yourself

Oct. 6, 2019; [U.S. News & World Report](#)

If you don't want to be one of the 40 million Americans who get the flu each year, it's time to roll up your sleeve.

Everyone 6 months of age or older should have a flu shot by late October, before flu season begins, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends. Flu puts hundreds of thousands in the hospital each year and last year it claimed up to 61,000 lives, the CDC estimated.



When is the best time to get your flu shot?

Sept. 28, 2019; [New York Times](#)

Q. Does the flu vaccine become less effective over the course of the flu season? If yes, should I delay getting my flu shot until later in the season?

A. Yes, immunity to the flu virus may wane over the course of the flu season, so you don't want to get your flu shot too early, such as in the summer months. But you also don't want to get it too late, once flu season starts. For most people, sometime in October is best.



Children lead flu immunization rates, but gaps remain

Sept. 26, 2019; [AAP News](#)

Influenza vaccination coverage has increased by more than 10% for children since the 2010 season but rose only 5% for adults during that span, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Of those children 6 months and older who died from the flu between 2010 and 2016, only 22% were fully vaccinated against the flu,” said Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II, J.D.



CDC Report: Flu Vaccination Coverage, United States, 2018–19 Influenza Season

Sept. 26, 2019; [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

An annual influenza (flu) vaccination is recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for all people 6 months and older who do not have contraindications to vaccination; vaccination is the primary way to prevent sickness and death caused by flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) analyzed data from two telephone surveys, the National Immunization Survey-Flu (NIS-Flu) and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), to estimate flu vaccination coverage for the U.S. population during the 2018–19 flu season.



National Institutes of Health: Volunteers needed for study of flu vaccine and heart disease

Flu infections can make heart conditions worse. People with heart disease are more likely to have a heart attack if they get the flu. And those living with heart failure—a condition where the heart muscle is damaged or weakened—are more likely to be hospitalized if they get it. Getting a flu shot (influenza vaccine) each year can help reduce your risk of a major heart-related event.

Researchers are studying whether a higher dose of the influenza vaccine can safely reduce heart- or lung-related problems compared with the standard dose. They're looking to enroll 9,300 participants nationwide. Learn more [here](#).



HIGHLIGHTS



#FluShotSelfie Social Media Campaign

Join us in our #FluShotSelfie campaign on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to show others how we protect ourselves and others with an annual flu vaccine! Simply use the hashtag and feel free to tag us!



Flu Champion Program

FFF recently launched its [Flu Champion program](#), which aims to mobilize and support people at the community level in flu awareness and education efforts. As part of this program, FFF has developed four different advocacy toolkits for schools, healthcare professionals, employers and community organizations, and general advocates. Interested in becoming a Flu Champion yourself? Reach out to us at contact@familiesfightingflu.org.



New Family Stories

Check out our new family stories about adult flu survivors, including [Allison Miller](#), [Christa Mitchell](#), and [Nick Fulweiler](#). Interested in sharing your flu story with us? Send us an email at contact@familiesfightingflu.org.



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