ENGAGING AND EDUCATING YOUR PATIENTS ABOUT FLU VACCINATION

Compelling ways of encouraging vaccination this flu season

Sometimes convincing patients to get an annual flu vaccination can be challenging, but it is worth the effort. The flu is a serious illness that can be deadly.[1] The more informed you are, the better you'll be able to convey to your patients the importance of getting an annual flu vaccination and increase immunization rates in your community.

Below are some tips and talking points for conversations you can have with your patients about flu vaccination.

Engage patients by addressing their specific situations:

ADULTS 50 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER

Compared with younger adults, adults 50 years of age and older have a higher prevalence of chronic medical conditions, many of which are associated with increased risk of flu-related complications and severe outcomes.[2,3] Let your senior patients know that there are vaccine options specifically for patients 65 years of age and older.[4]

ELIGIBLE CONTACT WITH CHILDREN YOUNGER THAN 6 MONTHS OF AGE

Children younger than 6 months of age can't get vaccinated against the flu.[5] The best way to help protect them from the flu is by vaccinating those around them.[5] Ask patients if they have children at home younger than 6 months of age or if they spend time around children that young. If they do, recommend that they get vaccinated today.

PEOPLE WITH CERTAIN MEDICAL CONDITIONS

People with medical conditions, including asthma, chronic lung disease, diabetes, and heart disease,[a] are considered to be at higher risk for developing flu-related complications.[2] If you notice that patients are picking up medication for a serious medical condition, be sure to let them know that they may be at higher risk for flu-related complications and recommend that they get a flu vaccination.

[a] For a list of additional medical conditions that place people at high risk for flu-related complications, visit http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm.

Use compelling data points during patient interactions:

EACH YEAR, AN ESTIMATED

5% to 20%

OF THE US POPULATION GET THE FLU,

WHICH IS APPROXIMATELY 16 TO 65 MILLION PEOPLE

IN RECENT YEARS[6,7]

Although vaccine effectiveness can vary, recent studies show that **FLU VACCINATION REDUCES THE RISK OF FLU ILLNESS BY ABOUT 40% TO 60%** among the overall population during seasons when most circulating flu virus strains are like the vaccine virus strains[8]

~70%

OF ADULTS 50 TO 64 YEARS OF AGE HAVE ≥1 CHRONIC CONDITION[9]

~50%

HAVE 2 OR MORE[9,10]

Flu vaccine was associated with reductions in rates of hospital admission in people with type 2 diabetes, for acute cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, and in all-cause mortality across 7 flu seasons[11]:

- 19% REDUCTION FOR ACUTE MYOCARDIAL INFARCTION
- 30% REDUCTION FOR STROKE
- 22% REDUCTION FOR HEART FAILURE
- 15% REDUCTION FOR PNEUMONIA OR FLU
- 24% REDUCTION FOR ALL-CAUSE DEATH

SUPPORTING YOUR IMMUNIZATION EFFORTS TO HELP YOU PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITIES

References: 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Influenza (flu): seasonal influenza, more information. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/disease.htm. Accessed June 21, 2018. **2.** CDC. Influenza (flu): people at high risk of developing flu-related complications. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm. Accessed June 21, 2018. **3.** Wang C-S, Wang S-T, Lai C-T, Lin L-J, Chou P. Impact of influenza vaccination on major cause-specific mortality. *Vaccine.* 2007;25:1196-1203. **4.** CDC. Influenza (flu): what you should know and do this flu season if you are 65 years and older. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/65over.htm. Accessed June 21, 2018. **5.** CDC. Influenza (flu): children, the flu, and the flu vaccine. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/children.htm. Accessed June 21, 2018. **6.** CDC. Flu prevention infographic. http://www.cdcfoundation.org/businesspulse/flu-prevention-infographic. Accessed June 28, 2018. **7.** US Census Bureau. American FactFinder: annual estimates of the resident population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk. Accessed June 21, 2018. **8.** CDC. Influenza (flu): vaccine effectiveness - how well does the flu vaccine work? http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/vaccineeffect.htm. Accessed June 21, 2018. **9.** CDC, AARP, American Medical Association. *Promoting Preventive Services for Adults 50-64: Community and Clinical Partnerships.* Atlanta, GA: National Association of Chronic Disease Directors; 2009. **10.** Gerteis J, Izrael D, Deitz D, et al. *Multiple Chronic Conditions Chartbook.* Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; 2014. AHRQ publication Q14-0038. **11.** Vamos EP, Pape UJ, Curcin V, et al. Effectiveness of the influenza vaccine in preventing admission to hospital and death in people with type 2 diabetes. *CMAJ.* 2016;188:E342-E351.

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