

Contact: L. J. Tan
National Influenza Vaccine Summit
(312) 464-4147

NATIONAL INFLUENZA VACCINE SUMMIT STRESSES IT'S NOT TOO LATE
TO VACCINATE AGAINST FLU

Experts say vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones

Chicago, IL, January 14, 2005 – The National Influenza Vaccine Summit today reiterated the importance of having people at high risk for serious flu complications receive an influenza vaccination, as the influenza season continues into February and March. The Summit is a multi-organizational panel of experts in all facets of influenza vaccination that is co-sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Medical Association (AMA).

The Summit noted that influenza vaccine is still available in many areas of the country for people in high-risk populations who were unable to receive a vaccination earlier in the season, and encouraged those at greatest risk to seek out a late season vaccination.

“We know that vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and your family from influenza, and that late season vaccination is effective,” said CDC Director Dr. Julie L. Gerberding. “Ideally, vaccination for those at high risk would have occurred earlier in the season, but the shortage has made it difficult. Many states still have some supply of the vaccine, and I strongly urge unvaccinated people at risk to try once again to obtain a shot.”

This year’s vaccine is a good match for the types of influenza that are circulating in the United States. Thanks to the ongoing efforts of influenza vaccine manufacturers to produce additional vaccine and the federal government to obtain additional vaccine

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sources to use in this country, many states still have a supply of vaccine to use with their high-risk populations. Supplies of vaccine will continue to be shipped to healthcare providers through the end of January. Because the amount of available vaccine varies from state-to-state, providers with extra vaccine are working with state and local health departments to get vaccine to those who need it. People interested in obtaining a late-season vaccination are encouraged to contact their local health department or local healthcare provider to see if vaccine is available.

Who Should Be Vaccinated?

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has recommended that the following priority groups should received the injectable inactivated influenza vaccine:

- All children aged 6-23 months
- Adults aged 65 years and older
- Persons aged 2-64 with underlying chronic medical conditions
- All women who will be pregnant during the influenza season
- Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities
- Children aged 2-18 on chronic aspirin therapy
- Health care workers involved in direct patient care
- Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children under six months of age.

When supply is sufficient, the injectable inactivated vaccine also is recommended for the following additional priority groups:

- Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of persons in high-risk groups (e.g., persons aged 65 years and older; persons with chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart or lung disease, or weakened immune systems because of illness or medication; and children under two years of age)
- All adults aged 50-64 years.

The intranasally administered, live, attenuated influenza vaccine, if available, is encouraged for all healthy persons who are aged 5-49 years and are not pregnant, especially health care workers, out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of persons in high-risk groups.

Persons in the priority groups identified above are encouraged to search locally for vaccine if their regular health care provider does not have vaccine available. Children under nine years of age require two doses of vaccine if they have not previously been vaccinated.

To view the ACIP recommendations, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/whoshouldget.htm>. For information on individual state recommendations, go to http://www.astho.org/templates/display_pub.php?u=JnB1Y19pZD0xMzE5

About the National Influenza Vaccine Summit

Co-sponsored by the CDC and the AMA, the National Influenza Vaccine Summit includes nearly 100 organizations from the fields of influenza vaccine research, production, distribution, promotion and administration. This collaborative group focuses on influenza vaccine issues that are important to achieve the Healthy People 2010 goals. Additionally, throughout the year, the Summit participants collaborate to address barriers that may hinder influenza vaccination rates. These activities range from addressing payment problems, to communicating nationally on the benefits of influenza vaccination, to creating tools to facilitate the provision of vaccine.

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