

Influenza Vaccination for Healthcare Personnel

Did You Know?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC) recommend that all healthcare personnel (HCP), including Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers get vaccinated annually against influenza (flu).

Research Indicates:

- Influenza outbreaks in hospitals and long-term care facilities have been attributed to low influenza vaccination coverage among healthcare personnel in these facilities.
- Higher vaccination levels among healthcare personnel have been associated with a lower risk of healthcare-associated influenza cases in both patients and personnel.
- Vaccinating healthcare personnel can reduce transmission of influenza, staff illness and absenteeism, and influenza-related illness and death.

Influenza Facts:

- Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness and potentially lead to death.
- The best way to prevent the flu is getting vaccinated every year.
- Flu is mainly spread to others by droplets that are made when people with the flu talk, sneeze, or cough. Droplets enter in the mouths and noses of those who are close by. The flu can spread between persons as far as about 6 feet away. Less often, a person may get the flu by touching a surface or an object that has flu virus on it and then touching his or her nose or mouth.
- People can pass the flu to another person before they are aware that they are sick. Healthy adults can infect people 1 day before they have flu symptoms through 5 to 7 days after becoming ill.



Resources:

**Los Angeles County,
Department of Public Health**
www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip/influenza_providers.htm

**California Department of
Public Health**
www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Influenza.aspx

**Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)**
www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm

Contact information:

**Vaccine Preventable Disease
Control Program:**
(213) 351-7800
IP@ph.lacounty.gov
www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip

Why Healthcare Personnel Vaccination Matters:

- By getting vaccinated, HCP protect themselves and their patients.
- Yearly vaccination is important, since flu virus strains are constantly changing. A flu vaccination from a previous season will not fully protect HCP against the current season's flu viruses.
- High rates of vaccination among HCP are associated with improved patient outcomes and fewer cases of influenza among other staff members.
- HCP can spread influenza to patients. According to a study conducted among nursing personnel and physicians in California, 35.5% of HCP developed influenza-like illness during the influenza season and 76.6% of them cared for patients while sick.
- Both hospitalization rates and healthcare personnel absenteeism are typically higher during the flu season, which increases the impact of flu-related absenteeism on hospital operations.

Healthcare Personnel Vaccination Coverage Levels:

- During the 2010-2011 influenza season, an estimated 63.5% of healthcare personnel in the U.S. were vaccinated against the flu. By the 2018-2019 influenza season, this increased to 81%.
- During the 2018-2019 influenza season, 98% of healthcare personnel in the U.S. who worked in facilities with an employer requirement for vaccination were vaccinated against influenza.

Evaluation data indicate that the implementation of the Los Angeles County Health Officer Order increased HCP influenza vaccination rates in acute care facilities in Los Angeles County. Influenza vaccination rates for all HCP, including contract personnel, increased from 60% in the influenza season prior to the Order (2012-2013) to 85% in the 2019-2020 season.

- Influenza vaccination rates for EMS healthcare personnel have not been routinely tracked and reported. For the 2020-2021 influenza season and future seasons, EMS provider agencies will be required to track their HCP influenza immunization rates as a part of this public health initiative and report their data when requested.