

National Center for Immunization & Respiratory Diseases 

## CDC's 2020-2021 Flu Vaccine Communications

July 30, 2020

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### Communications Goal & Special Target Audiences

- **GOAL:** Increase flu vaccine uptake, especially in people at higher risk of serious flu and COVID-19 outcomes.
- **SPECIAL TARGET AUDIENCES:**
  - Older Americans
  - People of any age with underlying health conditions (for example lung disease, heart disease, neurologic disorders, weakened immune systems, diabetes)
  - Workers in LTC facilities
  - Other Essential Workers
  - African Americans and Hispanics

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### Flu Vaccine Campaign Support

- Porter Novelli (existing 5-year agreement)
  - General population
  - Older Adults
  - People at high risk because of underlying medical conditions
- Ad Council campaign supported by CDC & AMA (new agreement)
  - African Americans
  - Hispanics

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### Research

- Research pending on both campaign activities

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### CDC Flu Messaging for 2020-2021

- Take 3
  - Get a flu vaccine
    - During the 2020-2021 cold and flu season, getting a flu vaccine is more important than ever to protect yourself, your loved ones, your community, and the global community from flu.
  - Take everyday preventive actions
  - Take antiviral drugs if prescribed.

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### Southern Hemisphere Activity

- Flu activity in the Southern Hemisphere has been reported at much lower levels than is typical.
- Fewer countries are reporting flu surveillance data and fewer viruses are being detected in general
- Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses, influenza A(H3N2) viruses and influenza B/Victoria viruses have co-circulated.
- Social distancing and other preventative measures to reduce spread of SARS-CoV-2, may have also helped to reduce the spread of influenza.
- The COVID-19 pandemic also has influenced health-seeking behaviors and testing priorities and capacities making interpretation challenging.

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### Upcoming U.S. Flu Season

- It is unclear what impact the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will have on the upcoming flu season.
  - There may be less flu than usual because of social distancing and other measures to reduce COVID-19.
  - Flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 may spread at the same time.
  - People may get flu and COVID-19 at the same time.
- If there is COVID-19 and flu activity at the same time, this could place a tremendous burden on the health care system and result in many illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths.

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### Flu Vaccination More Important Than Ever

- Each year flu causes millions of illnesses, hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations, and tens of thousands of deaths in the United States.
- A flu vaccine reduces flu illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths. It protects the person getting vaccinated and the people around them.
- A flu vaccine is an important tool to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community against flu.
- This **fall and winter**, getting a flu vaccine will be more important than ever since hospitals, clinics, and doctors' offices are likely to be busy caring for COVID-19 patients.

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### Flu Vaccine Benefits

- Flu vaccine reduces flu illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths. It protects the person getting vaccinated and the people around them.
- Flu vaccine is an important tool to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community against flu.
- Getting a flu vaccine will:
  - help keep you and your loved ones out of the medical setting, and
  - help conserve scarce medical resources to care for COVID-19 patients.
  - A flu vaccine also helps protect the frontline health care workers.

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### Flu Vaccine Benefits & Other Actions

- Flu usually causes a lot of illness in the fall and winter.
- Getting a flu vaccine will help prevent flu; this is an easy way to help "flatten the curve" of respiratory illnesses overall this fall and winter.
- Other actions that are always recommended are everyday preventive actions like staying home when sick, covering coughs and sneezes, and frequent handwashing.
- Depending on local circumstances during the upcoming season, additional actions may be recommended to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Take antiviral drugs if recommended and prescribed.

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### Upcoming Dates

- August 20: COCA Call – Flu Vaccine Recommendations & Guidance During 2020-2021
- August 21: Publication of 2020-2021 guidance on the prevention of flu using vaccine
- September 17: COCA Call – Flu Testing & Treatment During 2020-2021
- TBD: COCA Call – COVID-19 and Flu: Effects on Children
- Mid-September, soft launch CDC digital media campaign
- End September, radio media tour
- October 1, NFIID press conference to launch flu vaccine campaign
- End October, launch of AMA/Ad Council campaign
- Early December, National Influenza Vaccination Week

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### Updated Resources

- <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2020-2021.htm>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/prevention.htm>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm>

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