



GREATER NEW YORK HEALTH CARE FACILITIES ASSOCIATION

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Memo 20-28

To: Administrator, DNS, Medical Director, Infection Preventionist and QA Committee

From: Mary Gracey-White RN, Director of Regulatory Compliance

Date: August 13, 2020

Re: 2020-2021 Influenza Season

As we prepare for the 2020-2021 Influenza Season, the CDC has issued guidance differentiating influenza from COVID-19 as well as other updates. It is crucial to plan for a timely and aggressive influenza vaccination program in LTC, especially this season. Updated recommendations from the CDC are included below as well as details for the upcoming COCA Call on August 20th at 2pm that will review current information from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations for the 2020-2021 influenza vaccination season.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has not finalized all recommendations for the 2020-2021 Influenza. GNYHCFA will continue to provide updated guidance as it is received.

Recommendations for 65+:

Two new vaccines for use during the 2020-2021 flu season

- Quadrivalent high-dose vaccine licensed for use in adults 65 years and older. This will replace the previously licensed trivalent high-dose vaccine.
- Quadrivalent adjuvanted vaccine licensed for use in adults 65 years and older.
 - This vaccine is similar to the previously licensed trivalent vaccine containing MF59 adjuvant, but it has one additional influenza B component.



SNFs Regarding COVID-19 and Influenza Season:

Who Should Get a Flu Vaccine During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Reducing the overall burden of respiratory illnesses is important to protect vulnerable populations at risk for severe illness, the healthcare system and other critical infrastructure.

- Essential Workers: Including healthcare personnel (includes nursing home and long-term care facility).
- Personals at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19: Including adults aged 65 years and older, residents in a nursing home or long-term care facility, and persons of all ages with certain underlying medical conditions.
- Persons at increased risk for serious influenza complications: Including adults aged 65 years and older, and other persons with certain underlying medical conditions.

Timing of Flu Vaccine During COVID-19

The CDC does not anticipate a major change in the recommendation on timing of vaccination. As per CDC current guidance **getting vaccinated in July or August is too early, especially for older people, because of the likelihood of reduced protection against flu infection later in the flu season. September and October are good times to get vaccinated. However, if flu viruses are circulating, vaccination should continue, even in January or later.**

Difference between Influenza and COVID-19

- Both are contagious respiratory illnesses but are caused by different viruses.
- COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses.
- It may be hard to tell the difference between the two based on symptoms alone, which is why testing may be needed to confirm a diagnosis.
- This table compares COVID-19 and flu: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm>

Flu and COVID-19 at the Same Time

It is possible to have flu, as well as other respiratory illnesses, and COVID-19 at the same time.

Detection of Flu and COVID-19

CDC has developed a test that will check for A and B type seasonal flu viruses and SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that caused COVID-19). This test will be used by the U.S. public health laboratories. The FDA has given CDC an Emergency Use Authorization for this new test. This test is designed for use at CDC-supported laboratories at state and local levels, where it will supplement and streamline surveillance for flu and COVID-19.

How to Vaccinate

CDC is working with healthcare providers and state and local health departments to develop contingency plans on how to vaccinate people against flu without increasing their risk of exposure to respiratory germs, like the virus that causes COVID-19.



- Some settings that usually provide flu vaccine, may not offer vaccination this upcoming season because of challenges maintaining social distancing.
- Visit <https://www.vaccinefinder.org> for information on where to get a vaccine.

COCA Call:

Presenters will discuss updates to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations for the 2020-2021 influenza vaccination season. Topics include the Standards for Adult Immunization Practice, flu vaccination planning, general vaccination guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic, and guidance for large vaccination clinics held in satellite, temporary, or off-site locations.

Date: Thursday, August 20, 2020

Time: 2:00pm-3:00pm (ET)

Zoom Link: <https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1601970527>

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