

2021-22 INFLUENZA VACCINATION TALKING POINTS

FOR DRAFTING SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES, PRESS RELEASES, ARTICLES AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:

Getting flu vaccine is an easy step to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community.

- Just like getting a COVID-19 vaccine, getting a flu shot is an easy way to help you and your family stay healthy.
- It is likely that both COVID-19 and flu will circulate this fall and winter.
- Even if you have already gotten a COVID-19 vaccine, you are still recommended to get a flu vaccine.
- Many people at higher risk for serious flu illness are also at higher risk for serious illness due to COVID-19. Getting immunized against flu and COVID-19 could save your life and protect your loved ones!
- If you haven't gotten vaccinated against COVID-19 yet, you can now receive COVID-19 and flu shots at the same time! It's safe and convenient.
- Flu vaccination will help lower the burden on the health care system by decreasing flu illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths.
- Influenza and COVID-19 share many symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, fatigue, difficulty breathing, headaches, muscle pain, etc.). Preventing influenza means fewer people will need to seek medical care and testing for possible COVID-19 or influenza.
- CDC estimates that flu causes hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations and 12,000-61,000 deaths each flu season. While it's always important to prevent flu, it's especially important this season. A bad flu season combined with COVID-19 can put vulnerable populations at higher risk for illness.
- Depending on your age and health conditions, you can talk to your doctor about flu shot options that may be right for you. You can receive any flu vaccine product that you are eligible for.
- Flu vaccination is important for health care workers and others who live with or take care of vulnerable people to prevent spreading flu to them.

Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu shot, especially those who are most vulnerable.

- Flu vaccination lowers the chances that children and adults will end up in the hospital when they catch the flu.
- Older adults, smokers, or anyone with a chronic health condition like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease are especially at risk. Get your flu shot now- we are stronger together when we are all protected against flu.
- Last flu season, there was lower circulation of flu than usual. This year, with schools and other venues open again, there will likely be more flu circulating. Stay safe and protected by getting immunized against flu!
- Getting vaccinated yourself will also protect your loved ones, including those who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people, pregnant people, and people with chronic health conditions.

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- While flu vaccination is always important, this season getting vaccinated against both flu and COVID-19 is even more important for certain high-risk people. This includes:
 - People 50 years and older, who account for the majority of hospitalizations and deaths from flu and COVID-19.
 - Adults aged 40 and older have a ten times greater risk of a first heart attack and an eight times greater risk of a first stroke after catching flu.
 - People with underlying medical conditions like lung disease, heart disease, neurologic disorders, weakened immune systems, and diabetes.
 - African Americans, Latinx and Native populations, who are disproportionately affected by chronic medical conditions that can increase the risk for serious flu and COVID-19.
 - Caregivers in long-term care facilities who are in daily close contact with residents, who are most vulnerable to serious flu and COVID-19 illness and death.
 - Essential workers who are more likely to be exposed to flu and COVID-19.

Don't Wait—Vaccinate!

- We are stronger when we are all protected. Call your doctor or visit your local pharmacy to get your flu shot today.
- If you don't have health insurance, you and your child can still get vaccinated. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program offers free vaccines to families who cannot afford to pay for their children's vaccines (through 18 years of age). Adults can visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find a place nearby to get your flu shot.
- According to CDC, 80% of adults 55 years of age and older have at least one chronic condition. Flu can be deadly for people with chronic conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, and asthma. Learn more about flu at Don't Wait Vaccinate Campaign.

Reopening California: School, Recreation Centers, Businesses, etc.

- With California reopening in 2021, it is critical to get a flu shot to prevent the spread of flu and its most serious complications.
- With schools and after school programs reopening, flu vaccine can help children stay healthy. Make a flu shot appointment with your child's medical provider or visit your local pharmacy now to help protect them throughout the school year.
- As California reopens and there is less social distancing, getting a flu shot is the most effective way to help protect yourself and your loved ones against flu.

Medical providers and pharmacies are taking every precaution to vaccinate you safely.

- During the pandemic, hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, and other settings across the state are taking additional measures to ensure patients are safe when getting vaccinated.
- Your medical team and local pharmacy are making it safe to come in. Ask them about their COVID-19 safety measures, such as separating appointment times for sick and healthy patients, disinfecting, and physical distancing.