

Notice Date: October 21, 2020
To: MyCare Providers
From: CareSource
Subject: Importance of the Flu Vaccination

Summary

Every winter, providers stress the importance of the flu vaccination. However, this year will be especially critical due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our health providers play a vital role in prevention by also getting their vaccination, as well as key to reinforcing medical benefits to our members. Some key topics can include the following:

How to tell the difference between the flu and COVID-19

- Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses.
- Common symptoms that COVID-19 and the flu share include: fever or feeling feverish / chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, (tiredness), sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle pain or body aches, headache, and although vomiting and diarrhea are more common in children these are symptoms of both. **Other signs and symptoms of COVID-19 different from the flu could include a change in or loss of taste and smell.**
- [By receiving the flu vaccination, you could be reducing confusion of symptoms of Influenza vs. COVID-19 and reduce added strain on our health care system.](#)

Benefits of the flu vaccination

- The sooner you get the flu vaccination the sooner you are protected. It can take two weeks for the vaccination to reach its full effect.
- It is important to get the flu vaccination every year! The flu viruses from last flu season will be different from the flu this season, because the virus changes each year. You need a new vaccine every year to protect yourself.

Who is at high risk for flu-related complications?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has published a list of people at high risk for developing flu-related complications. The list can be located at

https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/index.htm?CDC_AA_refVal=https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm

The list includes:

- Adults 65 years of age or older
- Pregnant women
- Residents of nursing homes and other long term care facilities

- People who have medical conditions including asthma, chronic lung disease, heart disease and kidney disease.

Flu vaccination facts

- “Flu season” can last from early October to late May.
- The flu is easily spread on infected surfaces & by contact with others. The holiday togetherness increases the chance of spreading the flu. By getting a flu shot members can reduce those chances which means more time for holiday fun!

As always, we thank our providers for their collaboration and support of our member’s critical health care needs. Protect yourself, protect your loved ones.

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