

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/vaccination/navigating-the-2024-2025-flu-season-acips-latest-guidance/26594/>

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Navigating the 2024-2025 Flu Season: ACIP's Latest Guidance

Announcer Introduction

You're listening to *VacciNation* on ReachMD. On this episode, sponsored by CSL Seqirus, we'll discuss the latest recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for the 2024-2025 flu season with Dr. Paul Hunter. Dr. Hunter is a family medicine doctor in Madison, Wisconsin and is affiliated with multiple hospitals in the area, including UW Health. Let's hear from him now.

Dr. Hunter

2024-2025 flu vaccines were updated to include the most prevalent strains, like A(H1/N1), A(H3/N2), and B/Victoria. These updates are important because every year, the influenza virus does mutate and create new strains that we're not quite protected against because we weren't exposed to them in the past. And so every year, we have to make slight tweaks on which strains are selected. And there's a process that happens worldwide on that through the World Health Organization and the FDA. And then the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices takes those into consideration for the vote that they do annually to recommend the flu vaccines to the whole U.S. population.

Now in terms of who should receive the vaccines and when, flu vaccination should ideally be offered by the end of October. This timing is critical because the vaccine efficacy or effectiveness lasts for approximately 4 to 6 months. And that waning of the effectiveness needs to be timed to when the peak of the flu season is likely to happen. But don't stop vaccinating past the end of October because we're going to have influenza throughout in moderate amounts, but it tapers off after the peak of the flu season.

Annual flu vaccination is recommended for all patients aged 6 months and older who do not have contraindications. And vaccination is especially important for high-risk groups, including pregnant women, young children, older adults, and patients with chronic health conditions. Additionally, the guidelines recommend adjuvanted and higher-dose vaccines for patients 65 years and older due to their efficacy in this age group. It's important for patients in these high-risk groups—but also for all patients—to get vaccinated because of the complications that influenza can cause. People in the high-risk groups can end up with hospitalizations and on ventilators. So make sure that you take advantage of every opportunity to vaccinate people. Make sure you have in place in your clinics the ability to give vaccines through standing orders, through extended hours—not just during regular hours—and at urgent care visits, as well as during the well-child and adult physicals.

Announcer Close

More information on the ACIP flu vaccine recommendations, including specific guidance for immunocompromised individuals and solid organ transplant recipients, can be found in the related content section below. This episode of *VacciNation* was sponsored by CSL Seqirus. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *VacciNation* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!