



Contact: Tracy Danos - 619-515-2858 (Community Health Improvement Partners)

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS (CHIP)
URGES Physicians to Prepare for Flu Season

November 22, 2002

Identify your High Risk Patients

Healthcare providers are encouraged to identify their patients who are eligible for flu vaccination. **All** of the following people are at **HIGH RISK** for complications from influenza. It is best to be vaccinated in **NOVEMBER**.

- Persons aged 65 years old or older
- Children 6 – 23 months
- Adults and children with a chronic health condition, i.e. heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease, lung disease, anemias, asthma, cancer, HIV/AIDS and other conditions that result in an impaired immune system.
- Women who will be more than 3 months pregnant during flu season
- Children and teens on long-term aspirin therapy
- Household contacts or care-givers of people at high risk or children under 2 years old
- Healthcare workers
- Children *6 months – 8 years old* getting the very first flu shot need a booster shot one month after the first dose of vaccine

In addition, according to CDC guidelines, healthy people age 50-65, at moderate risk, should now be vaccinated too. Flu season in San Diego often peaks in January or February. Persons at risk for complications from influenza disease should get their vaccine now to ensure protection before disease arrives in our community.

Vaccine

According to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) vaccination efforts for all groups, especially persons at high risk, their household contacts, and health care workers, should continue into December or later. If in need of more vaccine, providers should contact their regular sources or visit the CHIP website at www.sdchip.org, click the “No Flu” icon, and select Vaccine Exchange.

Holiday Staffing

The holidays are fast approaching. Please ensure you have a staffing plan that takes into account a possible increase in illness. Consider keeping offices open on certain days during the holidays or provide a mechanism to triage sick calls to avoid patients using the emergency department inappropriately. Thank you for your consideration.

Pneumococcal and Td

Don't forget to vaccinate your patients against Pneumococcal and Td! Pneumococcal may be given year round and for most is only needed once in a lifetime. Td may be given to anyone 7 years or older. Review your patient's records and make sure they are up – to- date!

Resources

- The *San Diego County Immunization Initiative* (I3) has a website containing information for providers. Visit I3's website at www.immunization-sd.org.
- Healthcare providers may also check the *CHIP* website for immunization information at www.sdchip.org.