Who Should Get the Flu Vaccine?

The flu is a short name for influenza. It is a contagious disease caused by a virus. The flu affects the whole body. It can cause you to have fever, cough, sore throat, headache, body aches, and extreme fatigue. Most people recover within a week or so. However, for people at risk, the flu can be serious and even deadly.

Children aren’t the only ones who need immunizations. That is why each year we publish educational reminders to all of our members to encourage them to get their annual influenza vaccination.

Priority groups who should seek flu vaccination:

- People who are 50 years old or older.
- Children 6 to 59 months old. Children younger than 2 years old have one of the highest rates of hospitalization from influenza.
- Adults and children with chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease, asthma, cancer or HIV/AIDS.
- Adults and children with conditions affecting respiratory function, including lung disease or spinal cord injuries.
- Women who will be pregnant during flu season. Flu season is typically November through March.
- Residents or staff members of nursing homes and long-term care facilities.
- Children aged 6 months to 18 years on chronic aspirin therapy.
- Health care workers involved in direct patient care.
- Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children younger than 6 months.

Reminders to Stay Healthy

To help ensure that members who may be at risk for the flu receive their vaccination, AmeriHealth sends reminders each fall. For more information or to sign up for reminders on other recommended screenings and tests, logon to www.amerihealthexpress.com.

Source: Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention