

# Know What's New for 2023-2024 Flu Immunizations

It'll be all hands on deck for **flu vaccines in 2023-2024**.

Be familiar with the latest changes...and how you can help.

**Vaccines.** All influenza vaccines will be quadrivalent again...but 1 of the 4 strains will be different than last year's vaccines.

Continue to dispense ANY age-appropriate flu vaccine for patients 6 months and older. But recall that intranasal *FluMist* is only an option for healthy, NONpregnant patients ages 2 through 49.

For patients age 65 and up, dispense a higher-dose or adjuvanted flu vaccine...*Fluzone High-Dose*, *Flublok*, or *Fluad*.

But if these aren't available, use any age-appropriate vaccine...don't wait. Explain that Medicare Part B covers all options.

Double-check that you're selecting the correct vaccine from your computer and fridge. It can be easy to mistake *Fluarix*...*Flucelvax*...*FluLaval*...*Fluzone*...*Fluzone High-Dose*...etc.

Let patients know that a combo flu/COVID-19 vaccine won't be available this season...but studies are ongoing.

**Timing.** Encourage influenza vaccination now...patients should ideally get vaccinated in September or October. But continue to offer flu vaccine as long as flu is circulating.

Pull in your pharmacist to discuss efficacy, safety, etc. For example, people given last season's flu vaccine were about 40% to 70% less likely to be hospitalized for influenza.

Don't give a flu "booster"...regardless of when patients get this year's vaccine. It's not recommended...and payers may not cover it.

But do help patients get any other needed immunizations (COVID-19, pneumococcal, RSV, etc) at the same visit as flu vaccine.

**Allergies.** CDC now says that patients with severe egg allergy can get any flu vaccine in ANY setting...not just a medical setting (office, etc). Evidence shows patients with an egg allergy don't have a higher reaction rate compared to those without an egg allergy.

Continue to follow your pharmacy's immunization protocols for screening, anaphylaxis kits, etc. Point out that egg-free flu vaccines (*Flucelvax*, *Flublok*) are still available if the patient prefers.

Use our resource, *Flu Vaccines for 2023-24*, to compare products...and view recommendations for kids or pregnant patients.

Also look into our *PTU Elite: Immunizations* program for training on vaccine administration.

## Key References:

- CDC. 2023-2024 CDC Flu Vaccination Recommendations Adopted. June 29, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/spotlights/2022-2023/flu-vaccination-recommendations-adopted.htm> (Accessed August 3, 2023).
- CDC. Influenza Vaccination of Persons with Egg Allergy: Evidence to Recommendations Discussion and Work Group Considerations. June 21, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/downloads/slides-2023-06-21-23/02-influenza-grohskopf-508.pdf> (Accessed August 3, 2023).

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-CDC. Influenza Vaccine Safety Update and Proposed Recommendations for the 2023-24 Influenza Season. June 21, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/downloads/slides-2023-06-21-23/03-influenza-grohskopf-508.pdf> (Accessed August 3, 2023).

-Greenhawt M, Turner PJ, Kelso JM. Administration of influenza vaccines to egg allergic recipients: A practice parameter update 2017. *Ann Allergy Asthma Immunol.* 2018 Jan;120(1):49-52.

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