

Flu Immunization Campaign through Worcester's Department of Public Health (DPH)

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Summer Assistantship Program

Project Goals

Work with the Department of Public Health in Worcester to learn about the logistics of flu immunization in Worcester and to prepare for the flu vaccine clinics in October 2015.

Why Vaccinate?

- Children under 6 months, pregnant women, senior citizens, and immunocompromised people are at higher risk of developing a serious illness from influenza.
- It is possible for healthy people to develop bronchitis, secondary bacterial pneumonia, and (rarely) meningitis, encephalitis and death from influenza complications.



Common Reasons for Refusing Vaccination

- "It made me sick last year."
- "It will give me the flu"
- "I got the vaccine last year. I don't need it again."
- "I am pregnant."
- "I have asthma."
- "I have an egg allergy."

Flu vaccine in Pregnancy

- Vaccine protects the pregnant woman, the unborn baby, and the baby after birth
 - Infants younger than 6 months cannot receive the vaccine
- Influenza is more likely cause severe illness in pregnant women, and is also risk for premature delivery.
- In 2004, the CDC and ACIP (Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices) began recommending routine vaccines for pregnant women at any stage of pregnancy.
- Most common side effects of the vaccine are the same as in the non-pregnant population (redness, tenderness at injection site)

Flu vaccine and asthma

- CDC recommends the flu vaccine for asthmatic children over 6 months.
- Children age 2-4 years old, or with history of wheezing in the past 12 months should not receive the nasal spray.
- People with asthma are at higher risk for complications from the flu (pneumonia, more severe asthma symptoms), but are not more likely to get the flu.

Flu vaccine and egg allergies

- Severe reactions to the vaccine in people who are allergic to eggs are unlikely; mild reactions may occur.
- Recommended that those with allergies and only have experienced hives after exposure to eggs:
 1. Receive vaccine from health care provider "familiar with potential manifestations of egg allergy" (4)
 2. Should be observed for at least 30 minutes after vaccine

Worcester DPH Flu clinic

- Previously, the state has supplied vaccines for students and teachers at the Worcester county public schools, and to senior citizens through an immunity day at the Worcester Senior Center.
- In 2015, the state will not be supplying vaccines for adults.

How can medical students get involved in the clinics?

- Clinics will take place in Worcester county public schools during the school days of 10/19 to 10/30.
- Volunteer in a clinic on a particular day. An email about signing up to volunteer will be sent out in September
- Injection training (Injection Training is offered for MS2 students through the clerkship program)

References

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4. Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). United States, 2014-15 Influenza Season (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6326a3.htm?s_cid=mm6326a3_humanflu_vaccination_Personal_History
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