This year, getting your flu shot is more important than ever.

Thank you for protecting your city by participating in the Move With The Mayor™ Flu Vaccination Campaign. Inside are valuable resources for social media, communications, and press relations to help you and your staff amplify your voice and encourage your residents to get their flu shots.
Facts About the Flu

2021-22 Flu Season

Benefits of Flu Vaccination

- Getting a flu shot reduces a person’s risk of getting the flu by as much as 60%.1

- The flu has caused 140,000-810,000 hospitalizations and 12,000-61,000 deaths each year since 2010, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.2

Who Should Get a Flu Shot?

- The CDC recommends that everyone age six months and older get a flu shot each year.3

- Flu vaccination is especially important for people with medical conditions such as asthma, heart disease, and diabetes, because they are at higher risk of developing severe flu complications.
  - For people with heart disease, the risk of having a heart attack is six times higher if they get the flu.4
  - People with diabetes are three times more likely to die and six times more likely to be hospitalized due to flu-related complications.5

Flu Shots and COVID-19

- It is safe to get a flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time.6

- Getting a flu shot reduces the risk of someone having flu symptoms that could be confused with those of COVID-19.7

- Even a mild flu season can disrupt hospitals that are already overwhelmed by the surge of COVID-19 cases.8

When to Get a Flu Shot

- A typical U.S. flu season peaks between December and February and can last as late as May.

- The CDC recommends that ideally, people should get a flu vaccine by the end of October.9

Sources:

1 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Vaccine Effectiveness: How Well do Flu Vaccines Work?"
2 CDC, "Disease Burden of Influenza."
4 "Why Adults with Heart Disease Need an Annual Flu Vaccine." National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, Feb. 12, 2021.
5 "For People with Diabetes, Flu Vaccination is More Important Than Ever." National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, Nov. 5, 2020.
6 Grohskopf LA, Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines. 7 Ibid.
9 Grohskopf LA, Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines.
SAMPLE PSA SCRIPTS

Move with the Mayor™ Flu Campaign

VERSION 1: FLU ONLY

Getting your flu shot this season is important to protect yourself, your loved ones, and our community against the flu.

And this year, it’s more important than ever to get your flu shot.

Last year, we took precautions against COVID-19 that also helped prevent the flu – so we have less natural immunity to the flu this year.

The flu shot is safe. It was developed for all of us. Flu shots are covered by insurance – and you may be able to get one at little or no cost even without health insurance.

The CDC recommends that everyone six months and older get a flu shot. So won’t you join me in getting yours?

Visit your local doctor, pharmacist, or health clinic to get yours today.

VERSION 2: FLU + COVID-19

Getting your flu shot this season is important to protect yourself, your loved ones, and our community against the flu.

With the flu and COVID-19 circulating this fall and winter – both of which can cause breathing problems – getting your flu shot is more important than ever.

The flu shot is safe – and it was developed for all of us. Flu shots are covered by insurance – and you may be able to get one at little or no cost even without health insurance.

You can even get your flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time – it’s safe AND protects you from both viruses with just one appointment.

The CDC recommends that everyone six months and older get a flu shot. So won’t you join me in getting yours?

Visit your local doctor, pharmacist, or health clinic to get yours today.
SAMPLE PSA SCRIPTS

Move with the Mayor™ Flu Campaign

INSTRUCTIONS

1. You may use any type of digital video recording device—phone, tablet, computer, or camera. Please orient the recording device horizontally. This will match how most people will watch your PSA.

2. When you have made your recording, please send it to your primary contact: jen.childress@nationalforum.org or carly.smitherman@nationalforum.org

3. If you’ve already received your flu shot, please also send photos or video of you getting vaccinated.

4. The National Forum will produce your PSA and send it to you for approval.

5. The National Forum will provide you with sample social media messages to use with your PSA.

6. With your approval, the PSA will include partner logos on the closing screen.
Social Media Templates

Two weeks out:

Graphics:  *This is a stock photo- you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files.

Facebook/Twitter:

![Facebook/Twitter Image]

Join me in taking action to protect
INSERT CITY NAME

Visit your local doctor, pharmacist, or health clinic to get your flu shot today.

Facebook Caption:
This year, it's more important than ever to get a flu shot. That's why I'm proud to be a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021. Get your flu shot and join me in taking action to help protect [insert City here] from the flu. I'm getting my flu shot [insert date of scheduled flu shot and location of flu shot clinic if applicable] and I hope you'll join me. Together, we can protect ourselves, our families and our community this fall and winter. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! #MWTM2021

Instagram:  

![Instagram Image]

Join me in taking action to protect
INSERT CITY NAME

Visit your local doctor, pharmacist, or health clinic to get your flu shot today.

Instagram Caption:
This year, it's more important than ever to get a flu shot. That's why I'm proud to be a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021. Get your flu shot and join me in taking action to help protect [insert City here] from the flu. I'm getting my flu shot [insert date of scheduled flu shot and location of flu shot clinic if applicable] and I hope you'll join me. Together, we can protect ourselves, our families and our community this fall and winter. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! #MWTM2021

Twitter Caption:
It's more important than ever to get a flu shot, & I'm proud to be a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021. I'm getting my shot [insert date/time/location of flu shot] Join me - visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today!
Social Media Templates

Two weeks out:

Graphics: *This is a stock photo- you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files.

Facebook/Twitter:

Facebook Caption:
While it's my hope that all [insert city name here] residents will join me in getting their flu shots this fall, I am especially asking those of you with conditions such as heart disease get your flu shot. If you have heart disease, your risk of a heart attack is six times higher if you get the flu. If you or someone you love has heart disease, encourage them and those around them to get their flu shots. Getting your flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu. If we work together, all of us here in [insert city name here] can stay healthy this flu season. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! Become a part of the #FluVaxCampaign2021 and get your shot today! #MWTM2021

Instagram Caption:
While it's my hope that all [insert city name here] residents will join me in getting their flu shots this fall, I am especially asking those of you with conditions such as heart disease get your flu shot. If you have heart disease, your risk of a heart attack is six times higher if you get the flu. If you or someone you love has heart disease, encourage them and those around them to get their flu shots. Getting your flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu. If we work together, all of us here in [insert city name here] can stay healthy this flu season. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! Become a part of the #FluVaxCampaign2021 and get your shot today!

Twitter Caption:
Did you know? People with heart disease have 6x higher risk of heart attack if they get the flu. Encourage those you love to get their flu shot – the best way to prevent the flu. If we all work together, [insert city name here] can stay healthy this flu season. #FluVaxCampaign2021
Social Media Templates

One week out:

Graphics: *This is a stock photo- you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files.

Facebook/Twitter:

Help keep [insert city here]'s kids healthy this flu season! The flu can be serious for children. Keep your family and community safe and healthy by ensuring that your whole family gets a flu shot this fall! I'm getting my shot next week- [insert flu shot date and flu shot clinic location if applicable] as a part of the #FluVaxCampaign2021. I hope you will join me in the effort to keep our children and our city healthy. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! #MWTM2021

Instagram:

Help keep [insert city here]'s kids healthy this flu season! The flu can be serious for children. Keep your family and community safe and healthy by ensuring that your whole family gets a flu shot this fall! I'm getting my shot next week- [insert flu shot date and flu shot clinic location if applicable] as a part of the #FluVaxCampaign2021. I hope you will join me in the effort to keep our children and our city healthy. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! (linked in my bio).

Twitter:

Keep [insert city here]'s kids healthy this flu season! The flu can be serious for children. Keep your family healthy by ensuring that your whole household gets a flu shot this fall! I'm getting my shot next week. Join me & visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today #FluVaxCampaign2021
Social Media Templates

One week out:

Graphics: *This is a stock photo- you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files.

Facebook/Twitter:

Facebook Caption:
It's time to get your flu shot! It can take up to two weeks after a flu shot for you to be fully protected. Make sure you're prepared by getting your flu vaccine now to help keep yourself and your fellow [insert name for residents of city] healthy. I'm getting my flu shot [insert day of week of scheduled flu shot] as a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021! I hope you'll join me. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! #MWTM2021

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Twitter Caption:
It's time to get your flu shot! It can take up to 2 weeks post-shot for you to be fully protected. Stay ahead of the flu & join me in getting your shot early. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! #FluVaxCampaign2021

Captions:

Facebook Caption:
It's time to get your flu shot! It can take up to two weeks after a flu shot for you to be fully protected. Make sure you're prepared by getting your flu vaccine now to help keep yourself and your fellow [insert name for residents of city] healthy. I'm getting my flu shot [insert day of week of scheduled flu shot] as a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021! I hope you'll join me. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! #MWTM2021

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Twitter Caption:
It's time to get your flu shot! It can take up to 2 weeks post-shot for you to be fully protected. Stay ahead of the flu & join me in getting your shot early. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! #FluVaxCampaign2021
Social Media Templates

Week of:

Graphics: *This is a stock photo- you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files.

Facebook/Twitter:

Today is the day! As a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021, I'm getting my flu shot [insert flu shot clinic location if applicable] to protect myself and to help keep [insert City name here] healthy this flu season. The flu can cause serious illness -- especially for those with conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. Getting your flu shot can help protect you from becoming seriously ill -- and help prevent hospitalization or even death from the flu virus. Please join me in getting your flu shot now, and help keep yourself, your family, and your community safe. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! #MWTM2021

Instagram:

Today is the day! As a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021, I'm getting my flu shot [insert flu shot clinic location if applicable] to protect myself and to help keep [insert City name here] healthy this flu season. The flu can cause serious illness -- especially for those with conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. Getting your flu shot can help protect you from becoming seriously ill -- and help prevent hospitalization or even death from the flu virus. Please join me in getting your flu shot now, and help keep yourself, your family, and your community safe. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today.

Twitter Caption:

Today is the day! I'm getting my flu shot [insert flu shot clinic location if applicable] to protect myself and keep [insert City name here] healthy this flu season. I hope you'll join me and get your shot, too! Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today. #FluVaxCampaign2021
Social Media Templates

Week of:

Graphics: *This is a stock photo- you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files*

Facebook/Twitter:

Captions:

Facebook Caption:
In case you missed it, I got my flu shot on [insert date and location of flu shot clinic if applicable] and it didn't hurt a bit! It feels good to know that I'll have stronger protection against the flu this year, and I'm proud to be a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021 to keep our city healthy. It's estimated that the flu caused 140,000-810,000 hospitalizations and 12,000-61,000 deaths each year since 2010. Protect yourself and your community and get your flu shot. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today #MWTM2021

Instagram Caption:
In case you missed it, I got my flu shot on [insert date and location of flu shot clinic if applicable] and it didn't hurt a bit! It feels good to know that I'll have stronger protection against the flu this year, and I'm proud to be a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021 to keep our city healthy. It's estimated that the flu caused 140,000-810,000 hospitalizations and 12,000-61,000 deaths each year since 2010. Protect yourself and your community and get your flu shot. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today.

Twitter Caption:
In case you missed it, I got my flu shot on [insert date and location of flu shot clinic if applicable]. The flu shot protects against death and hospitalizations from the flu. Protect yourself and your community and get your flu shot. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today. #FluVaxCampaign2021
Social Media Templates

Week After:

**Graphics:** *This is a stock photo- you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files.

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**Facebook/Twitter:**

*Did you know?*

People with diabetes are 3x more likely to die and 6x more likely to be hospitalized from flu-related complications.

**MOVE WITH THE MAYOR**

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**Captions:**

**Facebook Caption:**

The flu can be especially dangerous for people with conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. People with diabetes are three times more likely to die and six times more likely to be hospitalized from flu-related complications. If you or someone you love has diabetes, talk with them about the importance of getting their flu shot now. Help keep you and your loved ones safe this year. I got my flu shot as a part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021- please join me! Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today. #MWMT2021

**Instagram Caption:**

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**Twitter Caption:**

The flu can be especially dangerous for people with conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. People with diabetes are 3x more likely to die and 6x more likely to be hospitalized from flu-related complications. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today! #FluVaxCampaign2021
Social Media Templates

Week After:

Graphics: *This is a stock photo- you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files.

Facebook/Twitter:

**Captions:**

*Facebook Caption:*
Fall is here, which means it’s time to get your flu shot! I got mine last [insert date of flu shot and flu shot location if applicable] as part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021. I hope you’ll join me and get your flu shot, as it can reduce your risk of flu by up to 60%. Flu shots are available at many doctors’ offices, pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, health departments, and more. #MWTM2021

*Instagram Caption:*
Fall is here, which means it’s time to get your flu shot! I got mine last [insert date of flu shot and flu shot location if applicable] as part of the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021. I hope you’ll join me and get your flu shot, as it can reduce your risk of flu by up to 60%. Flu shots are available at many doctors’ offices, pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, health departments, and more. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today!

*Twitter Caption:*
Fall is here, which means it’s time to get your flu shot! Many places offer flu shots, from pharmacies to your doctor’s office. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today. #FluVaxCampaign2021
Social Media Templates

Two Weeks After:

Graphics: *This is a stock photo- you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files.

Facebook/Twitter:

Let's Stay Healthy, INSERT CITY NAME HERE

Follow these healthy habits:
- Eat healthy foods
- Be physically active
- Make sure you're getting enough sleep
- Wash your hands frequently (bonus if you carry and use hand sanitizer!)
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose

If we all get our flu shot and make healthy lifestyle choices, we can help reduce illness from the flu this year. I hope you'll join me in making [insert city name here] a healthier city this winter! #MWTM2021

Instagram:

Let's Stay Healthy, INSERT CITY NAME HERE

Follow these healthy habits:
- Eat healthy foods
- Be physically active
- Make sure you're getting enough sleep
- Wash your hands frequently (bonus if you carry and use hand sanitizer!)
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose

If we all get our flu shot and make healthy lifestyle choices, we can help reduce illness from the flu this year. I hope you'll join me in making [insert city name here] a healthier city this winter!

Captions:

Facebook Caption:
Let's stay healthy this flu season, [insert city name here]. Move with the Mayor™ has helped me share many healthy initiatives with you, and now we're tackling the flu with the #FluVaxCampaign2021. While getting your flu shot is the #1 way to prevent getting and spreading the flu, it also helps to follow these healthy habits:
- Eat healthy foods
- Be physically active
- Make sure you're getting enough sleep
- Wash your hands frequently (bonus if you carry and use hand sanitizer!)
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose

If we all get our flu shot and make healthy lifestyle choices, we can help reduce illness from the flu this year. I hope you'll join me in making [insert city name here] a healthier city this winter! #MWTM2021

Instagram Caption:
Let's stay healthy this flu season, [insert city name here]. Move with the Mayor™ has helped me share many healthy initiatives with you, and now we're tackling the flu with the #FluVaxCampaign2021. While getting your flu shot is the #1 way to prevent getting and spreading the flu, it also helps to follow these healthy habits:
- Eat healthy foods
- Be physically active
- Make sure you're getting enough sleep
- Wash your hands frequently (bonus if you carry and use hand sanitizer!)
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose

If we all get our flu shot and make healthy lifestyle choices, we can help reduce illness from the flu this year. I hope you'll join me in making [insert city name here] a healthier city this winter!

Twitter Caption:
While getting your flu shot is the #1 way to prevent contracting and spreading the flu, a healthy lifestyle can also help keep you safe this flu season. Try out these habits to keep [insert city name here] healthy & cut down on the impact of the flu this year.
#FluVaxCampaign2021
Social Media Templates

Two Weeks After:

Graphics: *This is a stock photo - you are free to change this if you feel the Mayor has a photo that would fit better. Please reach out to your primary contact for downloadable Canva files.

**Facebook/Twitter:**

Let's stay healthy this flu season,

[insert city name here]

Visit your local doctor, pharmacist, or health clinic to get your flu shot today.

**Instagram:**

Let's stay healthy this flu season,

[insert city name here]

Visit your local doctor, pharmacist, or health clinic to get your flu shot today.

**Captions:**

**Facebook Caption:**

It's not too late to get your flu shot! Flu season typically peaks between December and February, but can last as late as May! Many locations offer flu shots, including doctors' offices, pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, health departments, and more. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today. I hope you'll join me in the #FluVaxCampaign2021 and get your flu shot this season. It's up to us to keep our family, friends, and the city of [name of city here] safe and healthy. #MWTM2021

**Instagram Caption:**

It's not too late to get your flu shot! Flu season typically peaks between December and February, but can last as late as May! Many locations offer flu shots, including doctors' offices, pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, health departments, and more. To find a place near you to get your flu shot, visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today. I hope you'll join me in the #FluVaxCampaign2021 and get your flu shot.

**Twitter Caption:**

It's not too late to get your flu shot! Flu season typically peaks between Dec and Feb but can last as late as May! Many locations offer flu shots, including doctors’ offices, pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, health departments, and more. Visit your local pharmacist, doctor, or health clinic to get your flu shot today. #FluVaxCampaign2021
With both COVID-19 and the flu circulating, it's more important than ever to get your flu shot. If you haven't gotten your COVID-19 vaccine, you can get your flu shot and COVID vaccine at the same time! Save time AND help protect yourself and your loved ones from both viruses this season. I got my flu shot with the Move with the Mayor™ #FluVaxCampaign2021, I hope you'll join me. Let's stay safe, [insert city name here]! #MWTM2021
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FREE FLU SHOT CLINIC OPENS [DATE] TO HELP PROTECT [CITY] RESIDENTS AS FLU SEASON BEGINS

Flu shots more important than ever this year

Join Mayor [insert name] on [date] as [s/he] gets [her/his] flu vaccine to encourage [city] residents to protect themselves and their loved ones.

[CITY] [Date] - With the flu and COVID-19 circulating this fall and winter – both of which can cause breathing problems – getting a flu shot is more important than ever this year.

To spread the word about the particular importance of flu shots this season, Mayor [Name] will get [her/his] flu shot on [date] at [time] and discuss the one-two punch that flu combined with COVID-19 could deliver if we don’t take steps to prevent it.

“Getting our flu shots now will help prevent our local hospitals – and our friends, family and neighbors who work in those hospitals – from being overwhelmed with both flu and COVID-19 patients,” said Mayor [Name]. “People don’t always realize that you can become severely ill from the flu. I’m doing my part to protect myself and my loved ones by getting a flu shot, and I encourage my fellow community members to join me.”

The free flu shot clinic will be held at [insert address/identifying location details] and will be open from [insert hours of operation]. The clinic will provide [drive-thru/walk in/both drive-thru and walk in] flu vaccinations to anyone ages [age range].

WHAT’S DIFFERENT THIS FLU SEASON?

In addition to burdening hospitals that are already stressed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the flu could cause more illness this season, because in most U.S. communities, people will have less natural immunity. This is because the precautions we took last flu season against COVID-19 – such as staying home, wearing masks in public and social distancing – also helped prevent the flu. Getting a flu shot also reduces the risk of someone having flu symptoms that could be confused with those of COVID-19.

The good news: it’s safe to get a flu shot and COVID-19 vaccination at the same time, offering protection against both viruses with just one visit to a doctor, pharmacy or clinic.

KEY FLU FACTS

Getting a flu shot reduces the risk of contracting the flu by as much as 60%, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Flu has caused 140,000-810,000 hospitalizations and 12,000-61,000 deaths each year since 2010, according to the CDC. The CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older get a flu shot each year.

Flu vaccination is especially important for people with medical conditions such as asthma, heart disease, and diabetes, because they are at higher risk of developing severe flu complications.

For example:

- People with heart disease are six times more likely to have a heart attack if they get the flu.
- People with diabetes are three times more likely to die and six times more likely to be hospitalized due to flu-related complications.

Mayor [name]’s efforts to promote the importance of getting a flu shot are part of the Move with the Mayor™ initiative, a national campaign to eliminate cardiovascular health disparities and achieve health equity. This year, two dozen mayors across the country are helping to broaden the campaign’s scope by urging their communities to protect themselves against the flu. Move with the Mayor is a program of the nonprofit National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention.
WE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT COVID-19 SO MUCH IN THE PAST YEAR THAT IT’S EASY TO FORGET – OR AT LEAST DOWNPLAY – THE IMPACT THE FLU VIRUS CAN HAVE ON OUR COMMUNITY.

AS WE ENTER FLU SEASON THIS FALL, MANY PEOPLE MAY NOT REALIZE THAT THE FLU CAN BE ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS IN THE MIDST OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. WITH TWO POTENTIALLY DEADLY RESPIRATORY VIRUSES CIRCULATING THIS FALL AND WINTER, THE SIMPLE ACT OF GETTING A FLU SHOT HAS NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT.

IS THE FLU REALLY A BIG DEAL? MANY OF US MAY THINK OF THE FLU AS SOMETHING THAT KEEPS YOU HOME IN BED FOR A FEW DAYS. THE REALITY CAN BE MUCH MORE SERIOUS, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE OF US WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS SUCH AS ASTHMA, DIABETES, OR HEART DISEASE. THE CDC ESTIMATES THAT FLU HAS RESULTED IN 140,000-810,000 HOSPITALIZATIONS AND 12,000-61,000 DEATHS EACH YEAR SINCE 2010.

IF YOU HAVE HEART DISEASE, YOUR RISK OF HAVING A HEART ATTACK IS SIX TIMES HIGHER IF YOU GET THE FLU. PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY WHO HAVE DIABETES ARE THREE TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DIE AND SIX TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE HOSPITALIZED DUE TO FLU-RELATED COMPLICATIONS. OUR CHILDREN ALSO ARE AT INCREASED RISK OF BECOMING SERIOUSLY ILL FROM THE FLU VIRUS. THIS IS JUST ONE REASON THE CDC RECOMMENDS THAT EVERYONE AGE 6 MONTHS AND OLDER GET A FLU SHOT EVERY YEAR.

FLU VACCINATION IS EVEN MORE CRITICAL THIS YEAR FOR ANOTHER IMPORTANT REASON. LAST YEAR, THE PRECAUTIONS WE TOOK TO PROTECT OURSELVES FROM COVID-19 – SUCH AS WORKING OR ATTENDING SCHOOL FROM HOME, WEARING MASKS AND PRACTICING SOCIAL DISTANCING – ALSO HELPED PREVENT THE FLU. BECAUSE OF THAT, WE ALL HAVE LESS NATURAL IMMUNITY THIS YEAR TO PROTECT US THIS FLU SEASON.

THE GOOD NEWS: GETTING A FLU SHOT REDUCES YOUR RISK OF GETTING THE FLU BY AS MUCH AS 60%. IT’S ALSO EASY TO GET A FLU SHOT; MOST PHARMACIES AND SOME GROCERY STORES OFFER THEM, AS WELL AS HEALTH CLINICS [AND OUR OWN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT]. FLU SHOTS ARE COVERED BY INSURANCE, AND MANY EMPLOYERS OFFER THEM TO THEIR WORKERS AS A WORKPLACE BENEFIT. EVEN FOR SOMEONE WITH NO HEALTH INSURANCE, FLU SHOTS MAY BE AVAILABLE AT LITTLE OR NO COST. [PLEASE ADJUST AS APPROPRIATE BASED ON YOUR CITY.]

WITH OUR HOSPITALS ALREADY STRESSED BY COVID-19 PATIENTS, EVEN A MILD FLU SEASON THIS YEAR COULD CAUSE MORE DISRUPTION. GETTING YOUR FLU SHOT NOW WILL HELP PREVENT EVEN MORE PRESSURE ON OUR HOSPITALS – AS WELL AS OUR FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND NEIGHBORS WHO WORK THERE.

THE FLU SHOT IS SAFE – AND IT WAS DEVELOPED FOR ALL OF US. IT’S OUR BEST PROTECTION AGAINST THE FLU, AND IT WILL HELP PROTECT NOT ONLY OURSELVES, BUT ALSO OUR FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES AND OUR COMMUNITY. PLEASE JOIN ME THIS FALL IN GETTING YOUR FLU SHOT.

WHEN SHOULD YOU GET YOUR FLU SHOT? THERE’S NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT. [INSERT INFO ABOUT LOCAL FLU CLINIC IF APPLICABLE.] THE CDC RECOMMENDS THAT IDEALLY, WE ALL GET OUR FLU SHOT BY THE END OF OCTOBER.

AS WE CONTINUE TO WEATHER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THERE IS MORE GOOD NEWS: YOU CAN GET A FLU SHOT AND THE COVID-19 VACCINE AT THE SAME TIME. IT’S SAFE TO DO SO, AND IT PROTECTS YOU FROM BOTH VIRUSES WITH JUST ONE TRIP.

SOURCES

https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/index.html


American Medical Association, September 2020.

National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, 2020 & 2021