Go Blue, Fight Flu!

The 2014-2015 UMHS Influenza Vaccination Program

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What is influenza (the flu)?

- A contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses.
- Usual symptoms: fever, runny nose, sore throat, cough, body aches and fatigue.
- The flu can cause mild to severe illness, and at times lead to death – especially in vulnerable individuals.
- The best way to prevent the flu is by getting the flu vaccine each fall.
How the flu spreads

- Mainly through coughing or sneezing.
- Also through items used or touched by sick people, such as tissues or doorknobs.
  - If other people touch those items and then touch their noses or mouths, this lets the virus into the body.
If I get it, when am I contagious?

- You can spread flu from 1-2 days before you become sick until 5 days after your symptoms start.

**IN OTHER WORDS:**

- You can pass on the flu to someone before you know you are sick -- as well as while you are sick -- even if you have a very mild case.
The flu is just a “cold”... or is it?

- For many of us, flu is mild, like a cold but with a fever.
- “Stomach flu” (vomiting/diarrhea) is not usually caused by flu virus.
- For some people, flu can be serious, causing pneumonia and even death.
- Each year in the U.S., more than 200,000 people are hospitalized and tens of thousands of people die from flu.

To a healthy person, flu feels like a bad cold. But for many of our patients and family members, getting the flu can be deadly.
Who should get vaccinated & why?

- The Joint Commission requires that health care workers be vaccinated.
- The CDC recommends flu vaccination for all people over 6 months of age.
- The vaccine is safe and effective for most people.
- Adults need only 1 dose every year, which will protect against seasonal flu including the “H1N1” strain. (Some children need 2 doses.)
- If more of us are protected from infection, fewer of us can infect our patients, our family, our friends and others in the community.

Preventing the flu is easier than treating it!
Who should **not** get the flu vaccine?

- Anyone with severe allergy to eggs and egg products (difficulty breathing/facial swelling; not nausea or diarrhea)
- Anyone who has experienced a **severe allergic** reaction to flu vaccines in the past (not just fever/aches/soreness).
- Anyone who developed Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of getting vaccinated against the flu.
- The **nasal** (inhaled) form of flu vaccine should also not be given to anyone who is under 2, over 50, pregnant or chronically ill. **But they can get the regular flu vaccine!**
Why do some people feel lousy after getting vaccinated against flu?

- Some people get sore at the spot of the injection, a mild fever, muscle aches or fatigue soon after getting the vaccine.

- This is because the immune system is making antibodies that allow the body to fight flu. Symptoms last 1-3 days.

- There is perhaps a one-in-a-million chance of Guillain-Barré syndrome.

The flu vaccine cannot give you the flu!
How else can I keep from spreading flu?

- Wash your hands frequently, especially before & after patient contact
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Dispose of used tissues, towels, etc. promptly
- Don’t come to work if you have a fever or significant cough
2014-2015 flu vaccine program

If you are in the annual TB screening program:

- You are required to either get the flu vaccine, or wear a surgical or isolation mask during flu season for all face-to-face patient interactions or to enter a patient’s room for any reason.

- If you choose to decline the flu vaccine, you must have a personal consultation with an OHS professional either in person or by telephone. The designated phone line for declinations is: **734-936-9246**

- You can call the declination line 24/7. Messages will be checked daily (Monday-Friday) and a provider will call you back as quickly as they can.
2014-2105 Flu Program

If you are not in the annual TB screening program:

- You are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated against the flu!
- If you are not vaccinated: You must wear a surgical or isolation mask during flu season for all face-to-face patient interactions, or to enter a patient’s room for any reason.
How does the program affect you?

Are you in the annual TB screening program?

- **YES**
  - Are you willing/able to get vaccinated against flu?
    - **YES**
      - Great!
      - Check Health System Headlines or visit med.umich.edu/u/flu for vaccination locations, or ask your supervisor.
      - You’ll receive a sticker for your ID badge to show you’re vaccinated.
    - **NO**
      - You must have a personal consultation with an OHS professional either in person or by telephone.
      - During flu season, you MUST wear a mask for every face-to-face interaction with a patient or whenever you enter a patient's room.
  - **NO**
    - Will you interact face-to-face with patients or enter patient rooms for a job-related reason during this year’s flu season?
      - **YES**
        - It’s still a great idea to get vaccinated against the flu (see med.umich.edu/u/flu for locations), and get a sticker for your ID badge. If you don’t, you MUST wear a mask for every face-to-face patient interaction or for work in patient rooms during flu season.
      - **NO**
        - It’s still a great idea to get vaccinated to protect yourself, your family, your co-workers, and reduce the spread of flu in our area.
        - Check the Health System Headlines or visit med.umich.edu/u/flu for vaccination locations, or ask your supervisor.
Where can I get the flu vaccine?

- At any of the special walk-in Occupational Health clinics
  - See Healthy System Headlines or www.med.umich.edu/u/flu for a schedule
- On the inpatient floors from “vaccination champions”
- At Ambulatory Care sites from a member of the clinical team
- At Occupational Health in Med Inn during business hours

Or, if you get vaccinated by your own provider, or at a store or other location, you must fax the vaccine documentation form to Occupational Health at 734-763-7405. You can get your flu sticker from the OHS clinic once the form is received.

(If you get it from a U-M provider, no need to fax.)
If you are not vaccinated...

- Once the flu arrives in our area, a “masks on” message will go out.
- From then until the end of flu season, all unvaccinated employees, students, volunteers, contractors & vendors must wear a surgical or isolation mask during face-to-face patient interactions.
  - This includes entering patient rooms for any job-related reason (not just patient care).
- Masks will be provided.

This is an official UMHS policy for patient safety.* Just like other policies, corrective action will be taken for non-compliance.

*See the full policy at: [www.med.umich.edu/i/policies/ice/ICM_emphlth/Personn.htm](http://www.med.umich.edu/i/policies/ice/ICM_emphlth/Personn.htm)
Do other health systems do this?

Want to see more? Visit www.immunize.org/honor-roll
A parting “shot”...

- Protect yourself so you don’t get the flu from others.
- Protect your patients who depend on you to make them well, not sick.
- Protect your family and co-workers from getting the flu from you.
- Vaccination is part of our quality and safety program, like hand washing, surgical time outs & safe lifting.
- Vaccination is simple, safe, fast and free!
Think about this...

Would you want to be cared for by a health care worker who could give you the flu?
Be the Michigan Difference!
Ready to get your flu vaccine?

- **YES!** I want to join the fight against flu.
  - Visit [www.med.umich.edu/u/flu](http://www.med.umich.edu/u/flu) to learn where to get vaccinated.

- **I’m not sure.** Where can I get more info?
  - Visit [www.med.umich.edu/u/flu](http://www.med.umich.edu/u/flu) to see an FAQ and other materials

- **NO.** I am declining the vaccine:
  - **If I get an annual TB test:** I am required to consult with an Occupational Health professional either in person or by telephone *(734-936-9246)* by November 7. I know I will need to wear a surgical or isolation mask during patient interactions this flu season. Declination forms are not available online. Faxed declination forms will **not** be accepted.