Flu Safety Meeting Kit

INTRODUCTION

Who has not experienced being affected with the flu at some point? For those older than 65 and those who have weak immune systems are particularly at risk. Flu seasons vary in intensity from year to year. In the past 3 decades, the influenza virus has been most active in February and December. But the virus is usually most active in late October and lasts as late as early May.

FLU VACCINATIONS

Cold and flu prevention in the workplace image Influenza vaccination is the best way to prevent infection with the flu, but no vaccines are available to prevent common colds. A flu shot is also recommended for individuals with a high risk of flu complications.

Influenza vaccination reduces the likelihood of flu even for healthy adults. It is important to get a flu shot every year, as the vaccines are updated annually to include the most recent influenza strains.

To ensure the vaccine has enough time to stimulate antibody production before flu season, make sure you are vaccinated during autumn. Workplace vaccination is mandatory and paid for by employers of people who work in some industries (e.g. for healthcare workers in direct contact with patients or infected body fluids). In other industries it is voluntary, although employers may fund workplace vaccination programs because they maximize the number of employees who get immunized and minimize absenteeism due to influenza infection. Employers may also help their staff get vaccinated by making it easier to get the flu shot.

GENERAL PREVENTION OF THE FLU SPREAD

Ways to Prevent the Spread of the Flu

1. Getting vaccinated the single best way to prevent getting the flu.
2. Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
3. If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others. Image if over half of your work crew missed work for more than a week because of an infected worker coming into work. In some businesses where timelines are tight a situation like this can cause serious financial issues.
4. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
5. Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
6. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
7. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF FLU AT WORK

Employees are crucial resource at any business. Steps to take during to flu season, to protect employees are:

1. Encourage all employees to get a seasonal flu vaccine each fall. CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older get an annual flu vaccine.
2. Consider hosting a flu vaccine clinic at your workplace, if possible. Provide resources to employees about where they can get a flu vaccine in their community. The vaccine finder

application is a free online service to search for vaccines in your areas.

3. Develop and review sick leave policies the encourage sick workers to stay at home without fear of any reprisals.
4. Advise all employees to stay home if they are sick until at least 24 hours after their fever (temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher) is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicines.
5. Sick employees should be asked to go home. Employees who appear to have a flu symptom upon arrival or become sick during the work day should be promptly separated from others and asked to go home.
6. Develop other flexible policies to allow workers to telework (if feasible) and create other leave policies to allow workers to stay home to care for sick family members or care for children if schools close.
7. Instruct employees who are well, but who have a sick family member at home with the flu, that they can go to work as usual. These employees should monitor who have a certain underlying medical condition or who are pregnant should promptly call their health care provider for advice if they become sick.
8. Provide resources and a work environment that promotes preventive actions to reduce the spread of flu. For example, provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, and/or hand sanitizer.
9. Diseases can look different in men and women. That´s true of coronary artery disease. It´s true of osteoporosis, lupus, and depression. And it may be true of the flu. “The concept of the man flu, as commonly defined, is potentially unjust.” We need a better understanding of how the flu affects men and women and why it may affect them differently.
10. Until then, we should all do what we can to prevent the flu and limit its spread. Getting the flu vaccination, good handwashing, and avoiding others while sick are good first steps.

MORE PROTECTION/PREVENTION

Staying Healthy Reduces the Risk of Infections like Cold and Flu.

- Maintain a healthy diet.
- Exercise regularly but avoid very strenuous exercise;
- Avoid stress;
- Get plenty of sleep;
- Quit smoking:
- Stay properly hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids;
- Drink alcohol in moderation.

FINAL WORD

Workplaces should be equipped with a range of hygiene products that can be used to prevent transmission of cold and flu. These include tissues, soap, paper towels and disinfectant gels and wipes. Talk to your employer about providing these products if they do not already.