

What You Should Know for the 2014 - 2015 Flu Season

Influenza (Flu) is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently. Between 1976 and 2007, estimates of flu-associated deaths (http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/us_flu-related_deaths.htm) in the United States range from 3,000 to 49,000 people. During a regular flu season, about 90 percent of deaths occur in people 65 years and older.

Flu season in the United States can begin as early as October and last until May. During this time, flu viruses spread at higher levels in the U.S. An annual flu vaccine (either the flu shot or the nasal spray flu vaccine) is the best way to lower the chances that you will get seasonal flu and spread it to others. When more people get vaccinated against the flu, less flu can spread through a community.

Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine every season. Since February 24, 2010 CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted for "universal" flu vaccination in the United States to expand protection against the flu to more people.
*<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm>

Strategies for Businesses and Employees

CDC recommends two strategies for businesses and employers to help fight the flu:

Strategy 1: Host a flu vaccination clinic in the workplace. To minimize absenteeism, employers frequently offer onsite seasonal flu vaccination to employees at no or low cost. This can work well if the employer has an on-site occupational health clinic. If you don't have a clinic, pharmacies and community vaccinators can be contracted to provide seasonal flu vaccination services on-site.



Strategy 2: Promote flu vaccination in the community. Make sure your employees know where they and their families can get seasonal flu vaccines in their community. Find out which health care providers, pharmacies and clinics provide seasonal flu vaccines. Partner with a pharmacy or provider to get your employees vaccinated.

*http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/business/recommended_strategies.pdf

For more information visit the CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/business>

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December Health Observances

- ◆ [World AIDS Day](#) (1)
- ◆ [National Influenza Vaccination Week](#) (7-13)
- ◆ [Safe Toys and Gifts Month](#)

January Health Observances

- ◆ [Cervical Health Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [National Glaucoma Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [National Stalking Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [Thyroid Awareness Month](#)



Maine Center for Disease
Control and Prevention

An Office of the
Department of Health and Human Services

Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

Benefits of HIV/AIDS Education and Prevention in the Workplace

Currently, there are about 1.1 million people living with HIV, the virus that leads to AIDS, in the United States. Approximately 50,000 new HIV cases are reported every year. In Maine, records show there are about 1,700 people living with HIV.

HIV is spread through specific bodily fluids; those who engage in certain behaviors such as unprotected sex and sharing needles when injecting drugs. HIV can be transmitted to an infant when an untreated HIV positive mother gives birth or breastfeeds. It cannot be spread through casual contact.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 1 in 6 people in the United States have HIV and don't know it. They recommend individuals between ages 13 and 64 get tested at least once as part of their routine care. Having HIV/AIDS prevention as part of a workplace wellness program provides vital information to employees on how HIV is transmitted and the importance of getting tested.

Employers can request resources from their local health department or numerous community-based organizations throughout Maine that specialize in HIV testing and prevention services. Employees may not feel comfortable asking questions within the workplace. Providing people with a list of local resources may provide enough motivation for someone to seek out more information or get tested.

Including HIV/AIDS prevention as part of a workplace wellness program improves employees' knowledge about HIV. They can take the right steps to keep themselves and their families healthy, and protect the younger generation from becoming infected. It will also help prevent discrimination in the workplace by creating a more supportive and productive work environment for both HIV positive employees and their co-workers. Giving employees the tools they need to make decisions that keep them healthy can also lower healthcare costs for a business.

There are many resources available to assist employers in developing policies and plans for the workplace. The links below provide information regarding HIV education and resources available within local communities, the laws regarding HIV/AIDS in the workplace, and statistical information regarding the HIV epidemic in Maine.

For more information:

- www.mainepublichealth.gov/hiv
- www.AIDS.gov
- <http://www.dol.gov/odep/>

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Additional Resources




Department of Health and Human Services
Maine People Living Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

Paul R. LePage, Governor Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner