INCREASING INFLUENZA VACCINATION RATES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Annika M. Hofstetter, MD, PHD, MPH
University of Washington / Seattle Children’s Hospital
FACULTY DISCLOSURE

- I have no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
OBJECTIVES OF PRESENTATION

1. Describe current influenza vaccination rates in children
2. List common barriers to influenza vaccination
3. Discuss strategies to improve timely influenza vaccination
INFLUENZA REMAINS AN IMPORTANT DISEASE

- Influenza is a major cause of morbidity and mortality each year.
- Children also are a major source of transmission.
- Influenza season timing and severity are unpredictable.
- Annual influenza vaccination is a key prevention strategy.
INFLUENZA VACCINATION RATES IN CHILDREN

Healthy People 2030 Target

NIS-Flu, CDC

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®
INFLUENZA VACCINATION RATES IN CHILDREN

Healthy People 2030 Target

* 40.3% in 2020-2021
* 41.2% in 2019-2020

2021-2022 Season

Oct 9: 17.8%
Oct 16: 21.5%
Oct 23: 25%
Oct 30: 27.3%
Nov 6: 34.3*%
Influenza vaccination coverage differs across populations.

- Child age
- Race and ethnicity
- Household income
- Maternal education level
- Location
BARRIERS TO INFLUENZA VACCINATION

Patients and Families
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of awareness of needed vaccine
- Vaccine hesitancy
- Lack of provider recommendation
- Competing priorities
- Limited access

Staff, Providers, and Practices
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of awareness of needed vaccine
- Competing priorities
- Forget to order vaccine
- Time constraints
- Limited vaccine supply
STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE INFLUENZA VACCINATION

- Increase vaccine access (e.g., vaccination clinic)
- Implement vaccine reminder-recall
  - Identifies patients who are due or over-due for influenza vaccination
  - Serves as a “cue to action” for patients and families
  - Addresses key barriers to influenza vaccination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>No. of studies</th>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>Risk Ratio, 95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Childhood influenza vaccination</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9,265</td>
<td>1.51 (1.14-1.99)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jacobson Vann et al, 2018
STRATEGIES TO REDUCE MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

- Standardize vaccine workflow
  - Review vaccination status at all visits
  - Offer vaccine to all eligible patients
  - Bundle with other vaccines (e.g., COVID-19)
- Utilize electronic health record tools
  - Integration with local or state Immunization Information System
  - Standing vaccine orders
  - Provider prompts or alerts

Cataldi et al, 2020
TEAM APPROACH IS CRUCIAL

- Engage all members of the care team.
- Identify, train, and support influenza vaccine champion(s).
- Offer education regarding effective vaccine communication techniques.
EFFECTIVE INFLUENZA VACCINE COMMUNICATION

- Offer a strong, presumptive recommendation.
- Pursue initial recommendation if patient or family initially declines.
- Bundle vaccine recommendations.
- Tailor conversation to each patient and family.
- Use consistent messaging across entire care team.

Opel et al 2013; Hofstetter et al, 2017; Fontenot et al 2018
RESOURCES

Information for Pediatric Health Care Providers
- AAP Recommendations for Influenza Control and Prevention
  - Policy Statement [aap.org/influenzapolicystatement]
  - Technical Report [aap.org/influenzatechnicalreport]
- Red Book Online Influenza Resources [aap.org/RBOinfluenzaresources]
- Influenza Patient Care Page [www.aap.org/influenza]

Information for Patients, Families, and Caregivers
- The Flu: What Parents Need to Know [healthychildren.org/flu]
- Which Flu Vaccine Should My Children Get This Year? [healthychildren.org/flu vaccine]
- Flu: A Guide for Parents of Children or Adolescents with Chronic Health Conditions [healthychildren.org/fluguide]

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®
CONCLUSION

- Influenza remains an important disease for children and communities.
- Influenza vaccination rates are suboptimal.
- Multiple barriers to influenza vaccination exist.
- Evidenced-based strategies should be used address barriers in order to improve influenza vaccine uptake.
THANK YOU

- Members of AAP and medical providers of children and adolescents