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## News

### 20-820 Keep Patients Healthy with the Latest Recommendations for the Flu Vaccine

Date: 10/30/20

This information applies to Physicians and Participating Physician Groups (PPGs).

For Medi-Cal, this information applies to Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties.

#### Encourage patients to protect their health during the COVID-19 crisis

Below are highlights from the Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines report released on August 21, 2020. It contains updates from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and their recommendations for use of vaccines to prevent and control the flu for the 2020–2021 season.

The full report is available at on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/rr/rr6908a1.htm>).

#### 2020-2021 vaccine highlights

All persons ages six months and older should receive routine annual flu vaccination with a licensed, recommended and age-appropriate vaccine, unless they have specific contraindications.

Offer vaccinations as soon as available. Continue to offer them through the season, if available, since the flu may not appear in certain communities until May. There is no preferred recommendation made for one flu vaccine product over another.

More information from the ACIP report for the 2020–2021 season includes:

- Groups recommended for vaccination and the timing of vaccination.
- Available vaccine products and indications, including recent regulatory actions on new vaccine licensures and labeling changes for previously licensed vaccines.
- Vaccine dose considerations for children through older adults.
- Guidance for use in specific populations and situations (high risk, caregivers, persons with COVID-19, pregnancy, history of Guillain-Barré, travelers).
- Recommendations for people with an egg allergy.
- Vaccine selection and timing of vaccinations for immunocompromised people.

Different flu vaccine preparations have different indications as licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for the most current flu vaccine recommendations (<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/>).

#### Flu vaccine during COVID-19 pandemic

The 2020–2021 flu season will coincide with the continued or recurrent spread of COVID-19. Flu vaccination of persons ages six months and older to reduce prevalence of illness caused by the flu will reduce symptoms that might be confused with those of COVID-19. Prevention of and reduction in the severity of flu illness and reduction of outpatient illnesses, hospitalizations and intensive care unit admissions through flu vaccination also could ease stress on the health care system. Visit the CDC website for guidance for vaccine planning during the pandemic (<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html>).

#### Resources and tips for providers

- Remember to give a strong recommendation to patients to get their flu shot and address any barriers with them.
  - Patients are more likely to get a flu shot if their doctor recommends it, according to research.
  - Provide the flu vaccine during appointments. You can also have flu clinics where patients can get the vaccine without an appointment to help improve vaccination rates.
  - Address patients' health beliefs and perceptions about the flu vaccine. This can be a strong predictor of overcoming vaccination hesitancy. Remember to address barriers, such as perceived risk and susceptibility to the flu or the belief that they do not feel they need a flu shot.
- Use the SHARE method for recommending flu vaccinations to provide information effectively.
  - SHARE reasons to get the flu shot based on their age or other risk factors.
  - HIGHLIGHT positive experiences with the flu shot to reinforce benefits.
  - ADDRESS concerns about the vaccine, including effectiveness, side effects, safety and misconceptions. Patients are less likely to push back than you may think.
  - REMIND patients that the flu shot not only protects them but also everyone around them.
  - EXPLAIN that getting the flu can mean taking sick days from work or missing fun with family and friends.
- View a recorded webinar on vaccine hesitancy.
  - Access a vaccine hesitancy webinar recording and slides (dated May 20, 2020) by logging in to the Health Net provider portal ([https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en\\_us.html](https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us.html)) > Providers > Working with Health Net > Quality > Quality Improvement Corner > Provider Education > Provider Educational Webinar Calendar.

#### Vaccine products for 2020–2021

Various flu vaccine products are licensed and available from several different manufacturers. Go to the CDC website for more information about available flu vaccines (<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/acip/2020-2021/acip-table.htm>).

**Claim submission for the flu vaccine**

Reimbursement for flu vaccines is in accordance with the terms of the provider's Health Net Provider Participation Agreement (PPA) and the member's benefit plan design.

**Additional Information**

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this update, contact the applicable Health Net Provider Services Center within 60 days at:

LINE OF BUSINESS	TELEPHONE NUMBER	PROVIDER PORTAL	EMAIL ADDRESS
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EnhancedCare PPO (SBC)	1-844-463-8188	Health Net Provider Portal ( <a href="https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us/providers.html">https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us/providers.html</a> )	provider_servic (mailto:provide)
Health Net Employer Group HMO, POS, HSP, PPO, & EPO	1-800-641-7761	Health Net Provider Portal ( <a href="https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us/providers.html">https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us/providers.html</a> )	provider_servic (mailto:provide)
IFP (CommunityCare HMO, PPO, PureCare HSP, PureCare One EPO)	1-888-926-2164	Health Net California Provider Portal ( <a href="https://provider.healthnetcalifornia.com/sso/login?service=https%3A%2F%2Fprovider.healthnetcalifornia.com%2Fcareconnect%2Fj_spring_cas_security_check">https://provider.healthnetcalifornia.com/sso/login?service=https%3A%2F%2Fprovider.healthnetcalifornia.com%2Fcareconnect%2Fj_spring_cas_security_check</a> )	provider_servic (mailto:provide)
Medicare (individual)	1-800-929-9224	Health Net California Provider Portal ( <a href="https://provider.healthnetcalifornia.com/sso/login?service=https%3A%2F%2Fprovider.healthnetcalifornia.com%2Fcareconnect%2Fj_spring_cas_security_check">https://provider.healthnetcalifornia.com/sso/login?service=https%3A%2F%2Fprovider.healthnetcalifornia.com%2Fcareconnect%2Fj_spring_cas_security_check</a> )	provider_servic (mailto:provide)
Medicare (employer group)	1-800-929-9224	Health Net Provider Portal ( <a href="https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us/providers.html">https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us/providers.html</a> )	provider_servic (mailto:provide)
Medi-Cal	1-800-675-6110	Health Net Provider Portal ( <a href="https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us/providers.html">https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us/providers.html</a> )	N/A

Last Updated: 10/29/2020

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