

# Practice Management Tips for *Influenza Immunization*



## Strategies to increase influenza immunization rates:

- Hold dedicated influenza vaccination clinics after hours or on weekends
- Provide extra staff for vaccination-only visits during regular office hours
- Offer “walk-in” influenza vaccinations
- Extend office hours during peak influenza periods
- Display posters and other materials in the office emphasizing the importance of vaccination
- Immunize parents and adult caregivers at the same time as the children they care for
- Remind parents about getting all family members vaccinated
- Offer vaccinations during any visit when appropriate<sup>1</sup>
- Administer the influenza vaccine at illness visits as long as the illness is mild
- Work with other institutions, such as schools, to provide alternative vaccination sites<sup>2</sup>
- Consider providing home-visiting services where feasible<sup>3</sup>
- Vaccinate staff at or before the first on-site clinic
- Post the fact that all of your staff are already immunized

## Ways to remind patients and household contacts to be vaccinated:<sup>4</sup>

- Use a computerized method to identify patients who need vaccine based on age or chronic condition
- Track vaccine administration in all eligible patients
- Send reminders via postcard, telephone, or e-mail (which can be computer-generated) to the homes of all children aged 6 months or older
- Request parents’ cell-phone numbers for future immunization messaging<sup>5</sup>

## Address parental misconceptions and fears about influenza vaccine:<sup>6</sup>

- Ask parents about any concerns they may have about vaccination.
- Answer parents honestly and openly. Also explain the risks of nonvaccination as well as the benefits of vaccination.<sup>7</sup>
- Be sure the entire office team is authoritative on the correct way to address common questions.
- Offer handouts on vaccination and its safety.
- Provide referrals to reputable immunization Web sites for further information.
- Recommend vaccination—Keep in mind that parents rely on their clinician for pediatric health advice more than on any other source.

## References

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