

Point Out Changes to Flu and COVID-19 Vaccines for 2024-2025

You'll see **new versions of influenza vaccines and COVID-19 vaccines for the 2024-2025 season.**

Flu vaccines will be TRIVALENT...for the first time in over a decade.

Explain that all flu vaccines in the US will still protect against 2 A strains, H1N1 and an updated H3N2 strain...plus the B/Victoria strain. But they won't include B/Yamagata...it's no longer circulating.

If staff or patients ask, educate that annual flu vaccine doesn't protect against H5N1 bird flu. But production of H5N1 vaccines is underway...in case immunization becomes needed.

Expect your hospital to offer flu vaccine from October through March to meet the quality measure...similar to previous years.

Continue to recommend an annual flu vaccine for everyone 6 months and up...and use ANY product appropriate for their age and health status.

For patients 65 or older, give a higher-dose or adjuvanted flu vaccine...*Fluzone High-Dose, Flublok, or Fluad*...if available.

Be aware, CDC now says a high-dose or adjuvanted flu vaccine is an option for adults 18 to 64 who've received a solid organ transplant and are taking immunosuppressants (tacrolimus, etc).

Take note of other changes...to limit errors. For instance, *Fluzone High-Dose* is back to 0.5 mL/dose...NOT 0.7 mL like the last few years.

Bookmark our resource, Flu Vaccines for 2024-25, to compare products, including *FluMist*...and review guidance on immunizing kids, pregnant patients, and people with an egg allergy.

COVID-19 vaccines will also be updated...to try to match circulating variants. Expect 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccines from Moderna or Pfizer to specifically target the KP.2 variant...Novavax's vaccine will target JN.1.

Point out that any composition is expected to offer protection against current variants...and CDC doesn't prefer one product over another.

Recommend any age-appropriate 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine for all patients 6 months and up...just like flu. Follow CDC's Interim Clinical Considerations for dosing, who needs additional doses, etc.

Stay tuned in to our COVID-19 Vaccines resource for emerging updates.

For those getting COVID-19 or flu vaccines as outpatients, clarify that most payers cover them at no cost. But CDC's Bridge Access Program offering free COVID-19 vaccines to un- or under-insured adults ended August 2024.

And point out that it's okay for patients to get other vaccines they may need (RSV, shingles, Tdap, etc) at the same time.

Educate that a combo flu/COVID-19 vaccine could be available NEXT fall...and that flu/RSV and COVID-19/flu/RSV vaccines are in the works.

Go to your CE & Training Organizer to register for our live CE, *Immunization Updates 2024: Discussing Your Big Questions*, on Tuesday, October 15...or search for it afterward to listen on demand.

Key References:

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Hospital Pharmacist's Letter. September 2024, No. 400901

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