

2020-21 Flu Season Recommendations Amid COVID-19

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices shared updated influenza vaccine recommendations for the 2020-21 season in late August, recommending that health care providers ***offer flu shots to everyone 6 months and older with no contraindications by the end of October.***¹

The recommendations also include information on two new vaccines designed to achieve a stronger immune response in people 65 and over.

Care1st is urging all PCPs to strive to meet the October target, since this year's 2020–21 influenza season will coincide with the continued or recurrent circulation of SARS-CoV-2 (causing COVID-19).* Influenza vaccination given to persons aged ≥6 months will reduce symptoms that may be confused with those of COVID-19.

Prevention of and reduction in the severity of influenza illness through vaccination also could alleviate stress on the Arizona health care system if COVID-19 re-emerges in another wave this winter.

Care1st will be reaching out to members to encourage them to obtain flu shots as soon as possible. Watch for additional communications as more information about our strategies for meeting this challenge becomes available.

If you have questions, please contact Ed G. Fess, MD, Chief Medical Officer, at efess@care1staz.com. Thank you.

**Currently, members aged 19 years and older may obtain flu shots from Care1st-contracted pharmacies, as well as from PCPs.*

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices — United States, 2020–21 Influenza Season. *MMWR, Recommendations and Reports*. Aug. 21, 2020 / 69(8);1–24.

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