Annual Influenza Vaccine Provided by: Ms. Caroline Theuri, RN BSN

Health promotion is a major contributing factor that reflects in the productivity of every nation due to the resources and personnel involved in treating illnesses or compensation of staff through the missed work day’s program. One of the causes of missed work days is seasonal influenza or “flu” which occurs at increased rates during the months of September to May. To combat the seasonal influenza illness, the annual influenza vaccine is used to boost the immune system in children who are 6 months and older. One of the challenges encountered during the influenza vaccination process is associated with myths, beliefs or misconceptions that the annual influenza vaccine causes illness. These misconceptions and other negative factors lead a percentage of the population to declining the immunization. Additionally, the problem becomes difficult to tackle due to the rapid evolvement of the influenza virus. The evolving characteristic of the virus, also known as mutations, creates obstacles in predicting the strain that populations should be vaccinated against during the following annual influenza season. It is extremely important to understand that although the vaccine may sometimes vary from the strain, the annual influenza vaccine is highly recommended to increase protection against the variety of strains that may occur.

Regardless of the strain, one of the methods of engaging into health promotion and disease prevention in the community is encouraging immunization programs (Denisco & Barker, 2016, pg. 624). As public health professionals, we provide education and disseminate information regarding the annual influenza vaccine to ensure that the public understands the risks associated with the influenza illness. Additionally, education or training opportunities increase awareness of safety standards of disease prevention plus increase the likelihood of vaccination compliance.

Public health professionals play a major role in clearing influenza vaccine misconceptions through health campaigns among vulnerable populations for the benefit of avoiding hospital visits due to severe annual influenza illness or its complications (Bakhshi & While, 2014). Individuals with health conditions such as HIV/AIDS or cancer that contribute to a compromised immune system should consider being vaccinated to boost immunity and increase protection.

According to Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) guidelines, caregivers or home contacts of children aged between 6 months and 59 months, adults older than 50 years and immunocompromised individuals must consider getting immunized against the seasonal influenza (Grohskopf et al., 2018). In addition, it is recommended that healthcare workers who are likely to encounter immunocompromised individuals receive the influenza vaccine. This is to prevent transmission of the influenza virus to the vulnerable population that is at a higher risk for severe complications from the influenza. The influenza vaccine offers protection and every individual who does not have known contraindications to the vaccine should consider being vaccinated annually for continuous protection.

Resources/References:


Fort Sam Houston Triathlon #3

**SWIM:** 400M  
**BIKE:** 15 MILES  
**RUN:** 3 MILES

**Date/Time:** August 11, 7 a.m.  
**Location:** Aquatic Center, Bldg. 3300, Williams Road on Ft Sam Houston  
This event is $20. and open to all Department of Defense ID cardholders and family.

For more information, call 210-221-4887