

INFLUENZA, COVID-19, AND RSV TALKING POINTS FOR LONG-TERM CARE

Respiratory infections like flu, COVID-19, and RSV are common during the fall and winter and can put long-term care residents at risk for serious illness.

- Respiratory viruses can affect anyone, and those at higher risk for severe illness and even death include older adults, people with certain [chronic conditions](#), and people living in long-term care facilities.
- Flu causes an estimated 50,000 deaths, 700,000 hospitalizations and 40 million illnesses in the United States [each year](#).
- [RSV](#) causes an estimated 160,000 hospitalizations and 10,000 deaths in adults 65 years and older.
- More than 80% of [COVID-19](#) deaths occur in people over age 65.

Flu: Everyone 6 months and older should get an annual [flu vaccine](#).

- Getting the flu vaccine every year is safe and effective to prevent serious illness and death in adults and children. We are stronger when we are all protected!
- CDC preferentially recommends high dose, recombinant or adjuvanted flu vaccines over standard flu vaccines for adults 65 years and older.
- For most people, the flu vaccine should be given in September or October; however, getting the flu vaccine after October can still provide protection during the entire flu season.

COVID-19: Everyone 6 months and older should get the [updated COVID-19 vaccine](#).

- Updated COVID-19 vaccines are recommended for everyone 6 months and older.
- Vaccination remains the best protection against COVID-19-related hospitalization and death. Vaccination can also reduce the chances of suffering from long COVID.
- COVID-19 vaccines are safe and hundreds of millions of people have safely received a COVID-19 vaccine in the U.S.

RSV: Those 60 years and older who live in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities should receive an RSV vaccine.

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- Everyone 75 years of age and older and those who are 60-74 years of age and at [increased risk](#) of severe RSV disease, including those living in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities, should receive a dose of RSV vaccine.

For more information about RSV, visit CDC's [Clinical Overview of RSV](#) and CDPH's [RSV FAQs](#).

The RSV vaccine is also recommended for pregnant people at 32 through 36 weeks of pregnancy during September through January to prevent RSV infections in infants.

- Most infants will likely only need protection from either the prenatal RSV vaccine or infant immunization (monoclonal antibody products), but not both.
- Pregnant people can receive the RSV vaccine on the same day as other vaccines recommended during pregnancy, including Tdap, flu and COVID-19.
- These immunizations pass on protective antibodies to the baby.
- Pregnant people are encouraged to talk to their healthcare provider or midwife to learn more.

Staying up to date with immunizations is a simple action that long-term care staff, residents, and their families can take to protect each other from serious illness.

- It is safe and convenient to get the flu vaccine at the same time as other vaccines, including updated COVID-19 vaccines and the RSV vaccine for older adults. Older adults or those with underlying medical conditions are at higher risk for complications.
- Flu, RSV, and COVID-19 vaccination will help lower the burden on the health care system by decreasing serious illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths.
- For staff, staying up to date with immunizations like flu and COVID-19 means fewer sick visits to the doctor, less work absences, and staying healthy to care for your residents.
- Keep your immune system up to date! Just like our phones and computers need to be updated to avoid viruses, our immune systems need updating, too!
- If you are unable to get vaccinated at your facility, call your doctor or pharmacy, or schedule your flu and COVID-19 vaccines today at myturn.ca.gov.

If you work in a health care setting, immunizing against COVID-19 and flu is especially important.

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- Flu and COVID-19 vaccination is important for health care workers and others who live with or take care of vulnerable people to prevent spreading flu and COVID-19 to them.
- Caregivers in long-term care facilities are in daily close contact with residents who are more vulnerable to serious flu and COVID-19 illness and death.
- Need proof of having received your vaccines? Request a copy of your vaccine record from the California Digital Vaccine Record portal at <https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov/>.