



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL  
MANAGEMENT

Tuesday, October 11, 2016

**MEMORANDUM FOR: All Federal Employees**

FROM: Sylvia M. Burwell  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Beth F. Cobert  
Acting Director  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Subject: Seasonal Flu Prevention and Protection for the Federal Workforce

We encourage you to get your annual flu shot this year! Recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for individuals 6 months of age and older, the flu vaccine is the best way to protect against flu. Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations. The vaccine is especially important for people who are at [increased risk of complications from influenza](#)—young children, pregnant women, people 65 and older, and those with certain medical conditions—and their close contacts.

Immunizations, such as the flu vaccine, build a healthier workforce by helping to protect you, your coworkers, and your family. Federal employees and their family members can receive the flu vaccine through their Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plan. Most FEHB plans cover flu shots at pharmacies and retail stores, in addition to doctor's offices and clinics, with no co-pays. Additionally, many federal agencies offer flu shots onsite at no or low cost. Ask your agency to see if this option is available to you. Other prevention tips include frequent [hand washing](#) and proper [etiquette for coughs and sneezes](#). To avoid spreading the flu, please consider staying home if you develop symptoms and not shaking hands with someone who appears ill.

Besides seasonal flu, adults are at risk for a number of vaccine-preventable diseases such as pneumonia, shingles, whooping cough, and hepatitis. Other vaccines are recommended for adults depending on age, lifestyle, health status, travel plans, and previous immunizations. While getting your flu vaccine, ask your health care professional about other vaccines you may need. To learn more about recommended adult vaccines covered by insurance plans visit [vaccines.gov](#), take the [adult vaccination quiz](#), or view the [recommended adult vaccines](#). You can also join us on social media as we work together to #FightFlu.

Thank you for helping to ensure a healthier workforce through timely immunization.