

MEDIA RELEASE

Protect yourself and those around you. Get the influenza vaccine.

October 21, 2014 (OTTAWA) - For most of us, influenza will cause a few days of fever, cough and generally feeling unwell. But for some, this highly contagious respiratory disease can lead to severe complications requiring hospitalization, or even to death.

"Many Canadians don't know that children under the age of five and seniors over sixty-five, people with chronic illnesses such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease, pregnant women, Aboriginal people, people who are obese, and residents of nursing homes and other health care facilities are vulnerable groups that need protection from influenza," explains Dr. Susan Bowles, Chair of Immunize Canada.

"This makes influenza prevention by healthy individuals who can pass it on to those at high risk for severe complications a necessity," says Dr. Shelly McNeil, Vice Chair of Immunize Canada. "Healthy individuals can shed the influenza virus and transmit it before they experience any symptoms. That's why it is so important to get vaccinated against influenza every year," explains Dr. McNeil.

This fall, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends that all Canadians six months of age and older receive the seasonal influenza vaccine. The seasonal influenza vaccine is safe and the most effective way of preventing the spread of influenza.

It is now easier than ever for Canadians to keep track of their influenza immunizations thanks to a new app, ImmunizeCA, developed by Immunize Canada in collaboration with the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) and the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute (OHRI), and funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada. "The new ImmunizeCA app provides access to recommended immunization schedules, reliable, expert-approved, bilingual information about immunizations, as well as useful tools such as appointment reminders, and local outbreak alert notifications," says Dr. Shelly McNeil.

The app is easy to use and ideal for Canadians constantly on the go. It is available for secure, free download at the App Store, Google Play and Blackberry World. All can be accessed online at immunize.ca/app.

In our busy connected world, none of us is isolated, and the best way to protect yourself and the people around you is to get immunized. Talk to your doctor, nurse, pharmacist or local public health office about the seasonal influenza vaccine.

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About Immunize Canada

Immunize Canada is a national coalition with the overall aim of increasing awareness about the benefits of immunization and promoting the understanding and use of vaccines as recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). It is a trustworthy and independent voice in support of immunization of children, adolescents, adults and health care professionals. For more information, visit immunize.ca.