

STANDING ORDER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE INFLUENZA (FLU) VACCINE

POLICY:

Under this standing order medical assistants and RNs with proper training may provide influenza vaccinations to patients who fit the criteria below.

PURPOSE:

Influenza or flu can be a serious disease that leads to hospitalization and even death, especially for the elderly, young children, and those with chronic conditions. Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently. Even healthy people can get very sick from the flu and spread it to others. Over a period of 31 seasons between 1976 and 2007, estimates of flu-associated deaths in the United States range from a low of about 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people. The “flu season” in the United States can begin as early as October and last as late as May.

The flu vaccine comes in two different forms: the Trivalent Inactivated Influenza vaccine (TIV), which is given by injection, and the Live-attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV), which is given by nasal spray. An annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the chances that one will get seasonal flu or reduce complications from the flu, and lessen the chance to spread it to others. When more people get vaccinated against the flu, less flu can spread through that community.

PROCEDURE:

1. Identify adults in need of influenza vaccination based on the following criteria:
 - a. All adults, and children > 6 months should receive the flu vaccine unless there is a shortage.
 - b. If there is a flu vaccine shortage, prioritize these groups of people:
 - i. Chronic lung disease, including asthma
 - ii. Chronic heart or kidney disease
 - iii. Diabetes or other metabolic diseases
 - iv. Immunosuppression (HIV, or medications)
 - v. Hematologic disorders
 - vi. Diseases impacting breathing or creating risk of aspiration (seizure disorder, neuromuscular disorders, spinal cord injury, severe cognitive disorders)
 - vii. Pregnant women (need preservative-free flu vaccine)
 - viii. People who live in a nursing home or other chronic-care facilities
 - ix. People in close contact with high risk populations, including
 - A healthcare worker, caregiver, or household member in contact with person(s) at high risk of developing complications from influenza
 - Caretakers of or people living with a child age 0-6 years or of an adult age 50 years or older
2. Screen for contraindications to influenza vaccine:
 - a. Allergic reaction to egg products
 - b. Previous severe allergic reaction after a influenza vaccine
 - c. A moderate-to-severe illness with a fever (wait till fever subsides)
 - d. A history of Guillain–Barré Syndrome (a severe paralytic illness, also called GBS)

