

Beat the Flu

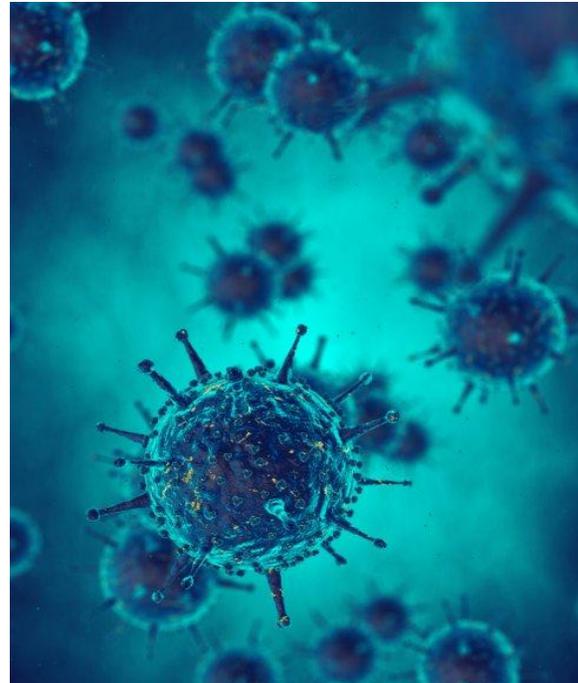
By Deb Hintz

It is that time of year when people of all ages start worrying about the flu season. The concern is real and prevention is important. The influenza virus can be extremely serious. Every year thousands of people are hospitalized due to the flu. Approximately 46,000 people die annually from flu complications. Each year new strains of the virus circulate making being vaccinated annually very important.

For the past couple of years a nasal vaccine called FluMist was available. It was used with small children so to avoid the painful poke of the injection. Unfortunately this type of vaccine has been proven rather ineffective in beating influenza last season. Recently the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) recommended that everyone aged 6 months and older get the tried and true flu shot to ward off getting sick this flu season. The inactivated influenza vaccine (trivalent or quadrivalent) was proved 63% effective against last season's flu strains whereas the nasal spray version was only 3%. This could mean that there will be more demand for the vaccination than normal.

The AAP encourages everyone to get their flu shot no later than October to be protected against the virus for the entire season. The length of flu season is unpredictable and outbreaks of flu can occur even in the spring, so healthcare providers are encouraged to provide the vaccine up to June 2017.

The very young and the very old are at high risk from flu complications. According to the CDC (Center for Disease Control) getting the flu shot reduces the chances of catching the flu by up to 90%. Other preventative measures include practicing good



Tried and true flu shot proves to be the best defence against influenza this year.

hand hygiene, covering the mouth when coughing or sneezing and maintaining a clean living environment. One especially helpful preventative measure is avoiding exposure to the flu by staying at home during the peak of the season.

Sources:

www.cdc.gov/flu

www.medscape.com. Medical News, 9/6/16.

www.mystatesman.com. Nicole Villalpando, 8/20/16.



HomeAid Health Care
Helping Hands at Home

Deb Hintz is Assistant to the Director for HomeAid Health Care. HomeAid provides services for the elderly who wish to remain safe and independent at home. HomeAid is sister company to MedAid Staffing which provides trained Caregivers to serve the staffing needs of local facilities as well as educational training classes for Caregivers. Both companies are associated with Prairie Home Assisted Living which has served the physical, spiritual, mental and health needs of their residents since 1999. Together the three family owned and operated companies provide comprehensive care for the elderly in the Fox Valley area of Wisconsin.