

December 2012

Flu Season is Here

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, flu activity is beginning to increase and further increases are expected in the coming weeks and months. Now is the time to protect against flu before activity increases in the community. About 5 to 20 percent of the population gets the flu each year and more than 200,000 people are hospitalized because of flu-related complications. Make each office visit an opportunity to talk with your patients about the importance of getting an annual flu vaccination and a pneumococcal vaccination according to the recommended schedule. This message also serves as a reminder for you to get your seasonal flu vaccination to protect yourself, your family, and your patients.

Remember – the Influenza and pneumococcal vaccines and their administration fees are covered Part B benefits. Influenza and pneumococcal vaccines are NOT Part D-covered drugs.

For More Information:

CMS has posted the 2012-2013 [Seasonal Influenza Vaccines Pricing](#) list. You may also refer to the [MLN Matters® Article #MM8047](#), “Influenza Vaccine Payment Allowances - Annual Update for 2012-2013 Season.”

Please visit the [CMS Medicare Learning Network® Preventive Services Educational Products](#) and [CMS Immunizations](#) web pages for more information on coverage and billing of the flu and pneumococcal vaccines and their administration fees. While some providers may offer the flu vaccine, those who don't can help their patients locate a vaccine provider within their local community. The [HealthMap Vaccine Finder](#) is a free, online service where users can find nearby locations offering flu vaccines.