

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



News Flash - NEW products from the Medicare Learning Network® (MLN)

["Providing the Annual Wellness Visit \(AWV\),"](#) Booklet, ICN 907786, Downloadable

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2012-2013 Seasonal Influenza (Flu) Resources for Health Care Professionals

Provider Types Affected

All Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) physicians, non-physician practitioners, providers, suppliers, and other health care professionals who order, refer, or provide seasonal flu vaccines and vaccine administration provided to Medicare beneficiaries

What You Need to Know

- Keep this MLN Matters® Special Edition Article and refer to it throughout the 2012 - 2013 flu season.
- Take advantage of each office visit as an opportunity to encourage your patients to protect themselves from the seasonal flu and serious complications by getting a seasonal flu shot.
- Continue to provide the seasonal flu shot as long as you have vaccine available, even after the new year.
- Don't forget to immunize yourself and your staff.

Disclaimer

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Introduction

Annual outbreaks of seasonal flu typically occur as early as October and as late as May, with peak months in January and February. Illness from seasonal flu usually lasts one to two weeks, and flu-related complications include pneumonia and dehydration. Approximately 5 to 20 percent of Americans catch the seasonal flu each year. Getting the flu vaccine is your best protection against the flu.¹

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) reminds health care professionals that Medicare Part B reimburses health care providers for seasonal flu vaccines and their administration. *(Medicare provides coverage of the seasonal flu vaccine without any out-of-pocket costs to the Medicare patient. No deductible or copayment/coinsurance applies.)*

Protect You and Your Family From the Flu!

You can help your Medicare patients reduce their risk for contracting seasonal flu and serious complications by using every office visit as an opportunity to recommend they take advantage of the annual seasonal flu shot benefit covered by Medicare. And don't forget, health care providers and their staff can spread the highly contagious flu virus to their patients. Don't forget to immunize yourself and your staff.

Educational Products for Health Care Professionals

CMS has developed a variety of educational resources to help Medicare FFS health care professionals understanding coverage, coding, billing, and reimbursement guidelines for seasonal flu vaccines and their administration.

1. MLN Seasonal Influenza Related Products for Health Care Professionals

- ***MLN Matters Article MM8047: Influenza Vaccine Payment Allowances – Annual Update for 2012-2013 Season*** – This article contains the payment allowances for the 2012-2013 flu season. You can download it at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM8047.pdf> on the CMS website.
- ***Quick Reference Information: Medicare Part B Immunization Billing*** - This educational tool is designed to provide education on Medicare-covered preventive immunizations. Available in print and as a downloadable PDF at http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/gr_immun_bill.pdf on the CMS website.

¹ Flu.gov. 2012. *Seasonal Flu [online]*. Washington D.C.: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010 [cited 3 October 2012]. Available from the World Wide Web: http://www.flu.gov/about_the_flu/seasonal/index.html

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- **Quick Reference Information: Preventive Services** - This educational tool is designed to provide education on the Medicare-covered preventive services. Available as a downloadable PDF at http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prevention/PrevntionGenInfo/Downloads/MPS_QuickReferenceChart_1.pdf on the CMS website.
- **MLN Preventive Services Educational Products Web Page** - This Medicare Learning Network® (MLN) web page provides descriptions of all MLN preventive services related educational products and resources designed specifically for use by Medicare FFS health care professionals. View this page at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/PreventiveServices.html> on the CMS website.
- **Preventive Services Educational Products PDF** – This PDF provides a list of all MLN products related to Medicare-covered preventive services. View this PDF at http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/education_products_prevserv.pdf on the CMS website.

2. Other CMS Resources

- **Seasonal Influenza Vaccines 2012 Pricing** is at <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Part-B-Drugs/McrPartBDrugAvgSalesPrice/2012ASPFiles.html> on the CMS website.
- **Prevention General Information Overview** is at <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prevention/PrevntionGenInfo/index.html> on the CMS website.
- **CMS Frequently Asked Questions** are available at <http://questions.cms.gov/faq.php> on the CMS website.
- **Medicare Benefit Policy Manual - Chapter 15, Section 50.4.4.2 – Immunizations** available at <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/bp102c15.pdf> on the CMS website.
- **Medicare Claims Processing Manual – Chapter 18, Preventive and Screening Services** available at <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/clm104c18.pdf> on the Internet.

3. Other Resources

The following non-CMS resources are just a few of the many available in which clinicians may find useful information and tools to help increase seasonal flu vaccine awareness and utilization during the 2012 – 2013 flu season:

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- Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices are at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/acip/default.htm> on the Internet.
- American Lung Association's Influenza (Flu) Center is at <http://www.lungusa.org> on the Internet. This website provides a flu clinic locator at <http://www.flucliniclocator.org> on the Internet. Individuals can enter their zip code to find a flu clinic in their area. Providers can also obtain information on how to add their flu clinic to this site.
- Other sites with helpful information include:
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>;
 - Flu.gov - <http://www.flu.gov>;
 - Food and Drug Administration - <http://www.fda.gov>;
 - Immunization Action Coalition - <http://www.immunize.org>;
 - Indian Health Services - <http://www.ihs.gov>;
 - National Alliance for Hispanic Health - <http://www.hispanichealth.org>;
 - National Foundation For Infectious Diseases - <http://www.nfid.org/influenza>;
 - National Library of Medicine and NIH Medline Plus - <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/immunization.html>;
 - National Network for Immunization Information - <http://www.immunizationinfo.org>;
 - National Vaccine Program - <http://www.hhs.gov/nvpo>;
 - Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion - <http://odphp.osophs.dhhs.gov>;
 - Partnership for Prevention - <http://www.prevent.org>; and
 - World Health Organization - <http://www.who.int/en> on the Internet.

Beneficiary Information

For information to share with your Medicare patients, please visit <http://www.medicare.gov> on the Internet.

Vaccination is the Best Protection Against the Flu — Influenza Vaccine Prices Are Now Available. Each office visit is an opportunity to check your patients' seasonal influenza (flu) and pneumonia immunization status and to start protecting your patients as soon as your 2012-2013 seasonal flu vaccine arrives. Ninety percent of flu-related deaths and more than half of flu-related hospitalizations occur in people age 65 and older. Seniors also have an increased risk of getting pneumonia, a complication of the flu. Remind your patients that seasonal flu vaccinations and a

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pneumococcal vaccination are recommended for optimal protection. Medicare provides coverage for one seasonal influenza virus vaccine per influenza season for all Medicare beneficiaries. Medicare generally provides coverage of pneumococcal vaccination and its administration once in a lifetime for all Medicare beneficiaries. Medicare may provide coverage of additional pneumococcal vaccinations based on risk or uncertainty of beneficiary pneumococcal vaccination status. Medicare provides coverage for these vaccines and their administration with no co-pay or deductible. And don't forget to immunize yourself and your staff. *Know what to do about the flu.*

Remember – Influenza vaccine plus its administration and pneumococcal vaccine plus its administration are covered Part B benefits. Influenza vaccine and pneumococcal vaccine are NOT Part D-covered drugs. CMS has posted the 2012-2013 [Seasonal Influenza Vaccines Pricing](#). You may also refer to the [MLN Matters® Article #MM8047](#), "Influenza Vaccine Payment Allowances - Annual Update for 2012-2013 Season."

For more information on coverage and billing of the flu vaccine and its administration, please visit the [CMS Medicare Learning Network® Preventive Services Educational Products](#) and [CMS Immunizations](#) web pages. And, while some providers may offer the flu vaccine, others can help their patients locate a vaccine provider within their local community. [HealthMap Vaccine Finder](#) is a free, online service where users can search for locations offering flu vaccines.

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