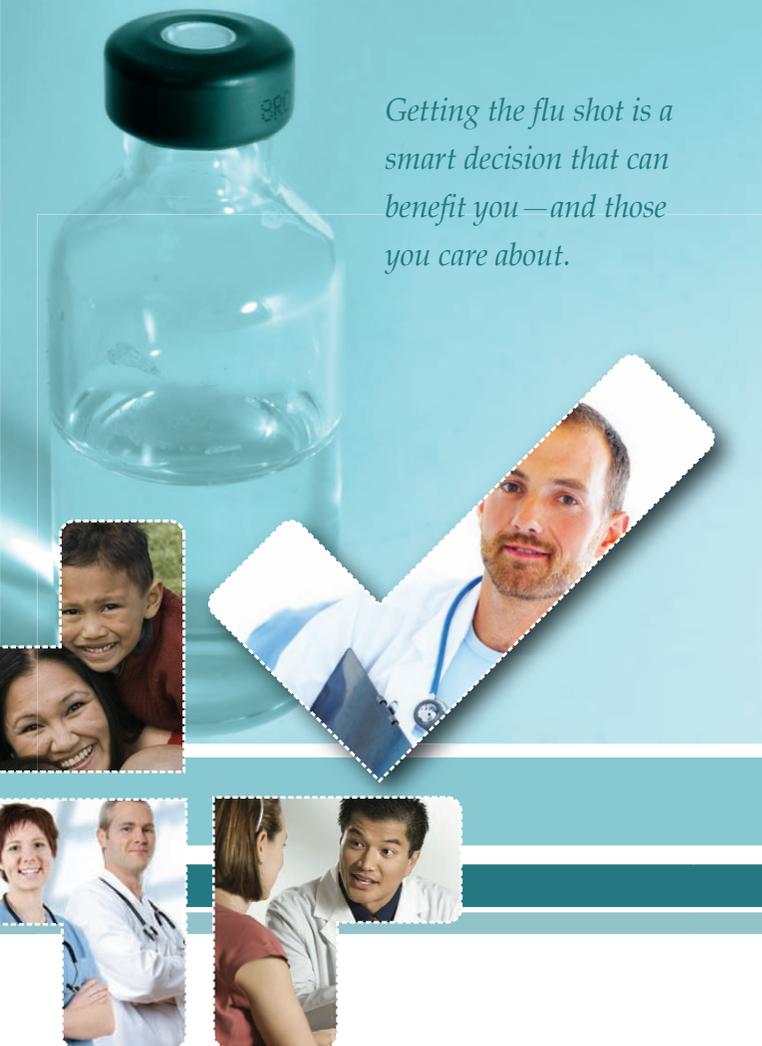


A **smart** choice. ✓ The **right** choice.

INFLUENZA VACCINATION CAMPAIGN

Getting the flu shot is a smart decision that can benefit you—and those you care about.



REGIONAL INFECTION
CONTROL NETWORKS

Protect yourself

As a health-care worker you know how dangerous influenza can be to at-risk groups, but did you know that thousands of previously healthy adults will find themselves hospitalized with pneumonia or other flu-related complications in Canada this year? You take pride in the work you do, but it is that very thing—working in a health-care setting—that puts you at a greater risk than the general population for contracting the flu.

Protect the ones you love

It's a well-known fact that influenza can prove deadly for the elderly, but what you might not know is that the highest rate of infection occurs in children. In fact, **children under the age of 2 are just as likely to be hospitalized for complications arising from the flu as someone over the age of 65.** While the vaccine is safe for children over the age of 6 months, younger babies are defenceless and need to be surrounded by people who have had the flu shot to limit their exposure to this potentially deadly virus. Influenza is particularly risky to a pregnant woman and her unborn child and a single vaccination can protect both.

Protect the ones you care for

Hospital-acquired influenza is a serious threat for *all* patients, not only the elderly. It is especially dangerous for those with weakened immune systems or chronic health conditions such as diabetes or other metabolic diseases. Patients with cancer, renal disease, anemia, hemoglobinopathy or a compromised respiratory function are also at high risk of complications from the flu.

The flu shot has been shown to reduce workplace absenteeism by 40 per cent, which means fewer staff shortages and less covering for absentee colleagues.

Why the flu shot?

The flu shot remains the most effective method of controlling the spread of influenza. While antiviral medications are available, they are effective only when administered within the first 24–48 hours of infection, long before many people even know they are sick. If you contract the virus **you can unknowingly spread the contagion**, especially if you are asymptomatic or subclinically ill.

The flu shot is...

- ✓ 70–90 per cent effective in preventing influenza in healthy adults—you can greatly lower the chances of taking it home to your children, family and friends
- ✓ made from inactivated (killed) viruses—it is impossible to get influenza from the flu vaccine
- ✓ safe—most people experience no side effects after being vaccinated, or if they do, it is a mild reaction, such as a temporary soreness or swelling at the injection site.

For... Your patients. Your family. Your colleagues. You.

The flu shot is safe, effective and easily accessible. You owe it to yourself and you owe it to the people who depend on you: your children, your family and loved ones, your friends and your patients.

Make the time. Get vaccinated now.

For further information on influenza and the flu vaccine, visit <http://ricn.on.ca/influenza>

"It's time for hospital professionals to roll up their sleeves. Getting vaccinated against influenza is an easy and effective way to ensure we are all a lot healthier this flu season."

— *Dr. Robert Cushman, CEO
Champlain Local Health Integration Network*