

European healthcare professionals recommend getting vaccinated against influenza also this year

In 2020-21, the influenza activity in Europe remained at a low level throughout the flu season, due to various public health and social measures implemented to reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2. However, it is expected that the seasonal influenza virus will circulate much more in the forthcoming winter, as social mixing and social contact now return in many European countries. In addition, because of the low incidence of flu last year, a lower level of natural population immunity against influenza is expected for the 2021-22 season, which could increase transmission and the burden of disease in people.

Therefore, European healthcare professionals highly recommend people, especially those belonging to an at-risk group, to adequately protect themselves from potential serious illness by getting an influenza vaccine also this year. Moreover, it is crucial that people maintain hygiene measures and avoid unnecessary physical crowding.

In order to secure sufficient protection against the influenza across Europe, the Coalition for Vaccination specifically reminds healthcare professionals to:

- Lead by example and make sure they are vaccinated against the influenza also this year;
- Be vigilant for potential lower uptake of influenza vaccination among their at-risk patients and encourage them pro-actively to take the flu vaccine;
- Provide credible and reliable information on vaccinations while discussing possible questions patients may have.

The Coalition for Vaccination also calls on the EU, national and regional health authorities to:

- Ensure timely supply of influenza vaccines and adequate support to healthcare professionals who give them;
- Involve and support healthcare professionals as trusted sources for the public in communication on influenza vaccination to secure sufficient uptake;
- Strengthen collaboration with healthcare professionals' organisations as key partners to help increasing trust in vaccines, fighting vaccine hesitancy and achieving higher uptake overall within local communities.

This statement is launched on the occasion of the Flu Awareness Week, organised by WHO/Europe. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) provides useful information on flu vaccination [here](#).

The Coalition for Vaccination brings together European associations of healthcare professionals and relevant student associations in the field. It was convened by the European Commission in 2019 with an aim to support delivering accurate information to the public, combating myths around vaccines and vaccination, and exchanging best practices on vaccination. More information about the Coalition for Vaccination can be found [here](#).