

Influenza Vaccination of Adults with Chronic Conditions: Challenges and Solutions

Rebecca Sunenshine, MD
Commander, US Public Health Service
CDC Career Epidemiology Field Officer
Maricopa County Department of Public Health

Disclaimer

The findings and conclusions in this presentation are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Epidemiology Approach: Show Me the Data

Maricopa County Data

- Survey of parents of School-aged children: February 2010
- Influenza vaccine focus groups: July 2009
- Vaccine survey: July 2009

Do People know what “high risk” conditions are?

- 600 parents interviewed in Maricopa County
- 85 (14%) indicated that someone in household at “high risk” of flu complications
- 509 (85%) said no one at high risk

Hmmm...

- **98 (19%) of those who said no one was high risk said someone in household had**
 - Lung disease e.g. asthma or COPD
 - Heart disease
 - Kidney disease
 - Diabetes
 - Neurologic disorder (e.g. Stroke or Parkinson's)
 - Immunosuppressive condition e.g. HIV or steroids
 - Pregnancy

Adult barriers to flu vaccine

- Adults have “stronger immune systems” than kids
- Flu shot makes you sick or “weakens body’s defense system”
- Flu can be avoided by hand washing and staying away from sick people
- Flu is not serious
- No time to get vaccinated, not convenient
- Vaccine is not effective

Clues to Possible Solutions

- Most trusted source of health info is doctors
- English speakers trusted CDC and WHO
- Spanish speakers trusted the health department, government and Hispanic media
- Most convenient locations for flu vaccine
 - Doctor's office (41%)
 - Local pharmacy or grocery stores (29%)

Adults Between 18 and 49: The Marketing Perspective

- Adults between 18 and 49... WHAT!?
- Adults 18-25
 - College students
 - Generally not concerned with health issues
- Adults 25-35
 - Just joining the workforce
 - Parents of young children
- Adults 35-49
 - Tend to have older children
 - More likely to see healthcare providers regularly



“Generation X” (born 1961-1981)

- Highest education level of any age group
- First generation to earn less than their parents
- Disdain for corporate politics and bureaucracy
- Don't trust any institution
- Want to be looked at as individuals
- Focus on relationships over achievement
- Short attention span
- Recognition and rewards must arrive quickly

Coaching Generation X : <http://www.coachingandmentoring.com/Articles/x's.html>



“Generation Y” (born 1976-1989)

- Generation X on steroids
- Really short attention span
- Diverse Internet resources, iPods, MySpace
- Intense multi-tasking
- Financially savvy
- Interested in preserving their quality of life
- Appreciate lifestyle

Understanding Generation Y. The Oberlin Review. Dec 8, 2006

How to reach 18-25 year olds

- **Messages**
 - Which chronic conditions count?
 - Why chronic conditions make you unique
 - Washing your hands doesn't keep people from covering you with their secretions
- **Strategies**
 - Do it fast– 30 seconds or less
 - Alternative media – Twitter, Facebook, You Tube
 - Easy access – offer vaccine at school
 - Look at the college trends

How to reach 25-35 year olds

- **Messages**
 - Which chronic conditions count?
 - Protect your friends and family
 - The flu is serious for people with health conditions
- **Strategies**
 - Show me, don't tell me
 - Convenience! – grocery stores and pharmacies
 - Use humor - it's less authoritative

How to reach 35-49 year olds

- **Messages**
 - Which chronic conditions count?
 - The conditions weaken your body's defenses against the flu, the vaccine increases defenses
- **Strategies**
 - Educate healthcare providers – people trust them
 - Focus on women: they make family health decisions
 - Utilize special interest groups for outreach
 - American Lung Association
 - American Diabetes Association



How many times do I have to tell you?
GET A FLU SHOT!!!

