

Make Plans to Offer Flu/Pneumonia Vaccines to Diabetes Patients!

As health care facilities and health departments across Kentucky begin to plan special efforts to administer influenza and pneumococcal vaccines this fall, the Kentucky Diabetes Prevention and Control Program (KDPCP) encourages physicians, diabetes educators and other health care professionals to make a special effort to reach out to those with diabetes. For people with diabetes, the flu can be more than just aches and pains. It can mean longer illness, hospitalization, or even death. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (CDC), people with diabetes are almost three times more likely to die with influenza or pneumonia. Plus, flu immunization is one of the most cost effective interventions that you can provide for your patients; yet a Kentucky survey indicates that only about half of Kentuckians with diabetes get the recommended vaccine.

If you are not already doing so, you are encouraged to include these important preventive measures as part of regular diabetes care. Some ways to incorporate this care into practice include:

- Recommending flu and pneumonia shots to patients with diabetes when they come for routine care, especially this flu season
- Considering instituting standing orders to make immunization a routine part of the health care regimen for patients with diabetes
- Educating patients about how simple, safe and effective the immunizations are, and how dangerous the flu and pneumonia are for people with diabetes

Flu and pneumonia shots are easy, safe, preventive measures that people with diabetes can take to protect themselves from the risks associated with flu and pneumonia. It could be a **LIFE SAVER** for one or more of your patients with diabetes.

An [educational flu poster](#) is downloadable on this website or can be ordered without charge through the Kentucky Publications Library. Just fax a request with the number needed and with a mailing address to 502-227-7191.