



Health Awareness

Get Clued to the Flu

(NAPSA)—This year, preventing the spread of the flu needs to be everyone's concern. Whether or not you are eligible to get a flu shot this season, every American can help reduce the spread of this potentially fatal disease by taking responsibility for good health hygiene, prompt diagnosis and proper treatment of the flu. This year, the shortage of flu vaccine has left many people confused, leaving them asking questions like, "What can I do?"

"Get Clued to the Flu" is a public awareness campaign introduced by BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), a global medical technology company. It has four key messages: Get Informed—Get Dosed—Get Diagnosed—Get Well. Each message offers ways to help reduce the impact of the flu at home and in the community.

Get Informed. The flu is a contagious respiratory infection caused by a number of influenza viruses. Although most people infected with the flu recover, it's still responsible for over 200,000 hospitalizations in the U.S. every year. In addition to causing illness in the general public, widespread influenza outbreaks also infect professionals who provide critical community services.

"It is important that all individuals be aware of the actions, responsibilities and choices that are available to them that could reduce the impact of a flu outbreak on the entire community," said David Durack, M.D., Vice President, Medical Affairs, BD.



Get Dosed. When supplies are adequate, flu vaccine is the single best way to prevent the flu. Due to vaccine shortages, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended that flu shots be reserved for those at highest risk of complications if they get the flu. As a result, public health organizations and industry are endeavoring to reach those most at risk and find ways to extend the vaccine supply. For example, use of dose-saving syringes following proper clinical procedure can minimize the waste of unused vaccine, which may occur with the use of conventional syringes. Single-unit, prefilled syringes help deliver precise dosing of vaccine for infants ages 6 to 23 months. And for some healthy persons who are 5 to 49 years of age and not pregnant, an intranasally administered flu vaccine mist can deliver a needle-free immunization.

You should speak with your healthcare professional to determine the options available within your community.

Get Diagnosed. Infection with the flu virus can lead to high

fever, viral pneumonia and other complications. With fewer people being protected by flu vaccine, it is even more important for individuals who feel flu-like symptoms to see a healthcare provider. Rapid respiratory diagnostics allow a healthcare provider to confirm flu diagnosis in just 15 minutes. Individuals with a confirmed case of the flu can prevent the spread of the disease by staying home and reducing contact with others, perhaps preventing a wider outbreak of the flu in the community.

Get Well. Children and adults who are sick with the flu should stay home until they have been without fever for 24 hours, to help ensure a full recovery and prevent spreading illness to others. "Fever caused by the flu is typically at least 101°F in both adults and children, with children more likely to have fever as high as 103°F to 105°F," said Michael Towns, M.D., Vice President, Medical Affairs, BD Diagnostics. Fever can be accurately monitored with a digital thermometer, which provides a fast temperature readout, night-light display and an auto memory that shows the last temperature reading. For young children, parents may choose a digital thermometer featuring favorite cartoon characters, such as SpongeBob SquarePants™ and the newly launched Dora the Explorer™ Digital Thermometers.

For more information, please visit: www.bd.com/flu.

