



Health Awareness

Olympic Champion And Mom Kristi Yamaguchi Urges Families To Prevent Influenza By Getting Vaccinated

Yearly Immunization Helps Protect Against Serious Illness

(NAPSA)—There are many “faces” of influenza—people who need to get vaccinated every year. Chances are you, your friends and your relatives should get an influenza vaccination. It is the best way to protect against influenza, also known as “the flu.”

In fact, more than 4 out of every 5 people in the U.S. are recommended to get vaccinated this year. The American Lung Association wants you to talk to your health-care provider about vaccination for you and your family.

Kristi Yamaguchi is best known as an Olympic champion and the most recent “Dancing with the Stars” winner. But her most important role is being a mom to her two young daughters and taking care of her family’s health. That’s why she makes sure they get vaccinated against influenza every year. She has joined the American Lung Association’s *Faces of Influenza* campaign to educate other families about the dangers of influenza and the need to be immunized each season.

“When my daughter Emma was born, my doctor gave me a flu vaccination before I left the hospital to help prevent spreading this serious disease to my newborn infant,” said Kristi. “Since then, I make sure we all get vaccinated every year. This includes my husband, my two daughters and even the grandparents in our family.”

Who Should Get Vaccinated

The nation’s health experts recommend many groups get an influenza vaccination this year, including: children 6 months-18



years of age; people 50 years of age and older; pregnant women; those with chronic medical conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or diabetes; and residents of long-term care facilities/nursing homes, among others.

Vaccination is also important for anyone who wishes to prevent influenza, household contacts or caregivers of anyone in a high-risk group (such as relatives, babysitters, and daycare providers), and health-care professionals. Vaccination usually takes about 2 weeks to provide full protection.

“You can get vaccinated against influenza any time during the fall, winter, and spring,” said Norman Edelman, MD, Chief Medical Officer of the American Lung Association. “The flu season usually peaks in February or March every year. This provides many months for you and your loved ones to get vaccinated. The virus that infects people changes every year, which is why we recommend influenza vaccination each season.”

About Influenza

Influenza is a serious disease that infects the lungs. It is caused by a virus that spreads from person to person. On average, each year, about 36,000 people die and roughly 226,000 people are hospitalized because of influenza and its complications.

To learn more about influenza and who should get immunized, visit the *Faces of Influenza* Web site: www.facesofinfluenza.org. You can also find out about vaccine clinics in your area through the American Lung Association Flu Clinic Locator.

“Are You a ‘Face’ of Influenza?”

There are nearly 250 million “faces” of influenza in the U.S.—people recommended to get vaccinated each year. Chances are this includes you and those you know.

- Anyone who wants to prevent influenza
- Children 6 months—18 years of age
- Persons 50 years of age and older
- Persons with high-risk conditions, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), diabetes or heart disease
- Residents of long-term care facilities and nursing homes
- Pregnant women
- Health care professionals
- Close contacts of those at risk — parents, grandparents, babysitters, and others

To learn more, visit the American Lung Association’s *Faces of Influenza* Web site: www.facesofinfluenza.org.

