



ASSURE[®] BRILLIANCE

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE & SUPPORT PROGRAM

Influenza

It's hard to believe, but we are already a month into the influenza (flu) season. The flu season typically runs between October and May each year, peaking between December and February. Over 113 million doses of the 2015-2016 flu vaccine have been distributed in the U.S. so far and this number is climbing each week. The yearly flu vaccine is the most important step in protecting against this serious disease.

People with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes are at a greater risk of flu complications ranging from ear infections to pneumonia, and can sometimes lead to death. This increased risk is due to the fact that diabetes reduces the immune system's ability to fight infections. Additionally, when a person with diabetes is ill it is harder to control their blood glucose levels.

The need for a flu shot is even more important for people that are at greater risk for serious flu complications and their close contacts.

Other steps that can be taken to reduce the spread of the flu virus include having residents:

- Cover their mouth and nose when sneezing with a tissue which should be disposed of after use
- Wash their hands often, and after coughing or sneezing, with soap and water
- Avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth
- Receive a pneumococcal (pneumonia) injection. If it has been more than five to ten years since the resident with diabetes last injection, they may need another.



Flu Symptoms

Fever	Headache
Cough	Chills
Sore throat	Fatigue
Runny or stuffy nose	Vomiting (some people)
Body aches	Diarrhea (some people)

According to the CDC, if a resident does contract the flu virus, the following steps should be taken:

- ✓ Administer an antiviral within 48 hours of flu virus onset*
- ✓ Continue administering diabetes medications, including insulin, if prescribed
- ✓ Conduct blood glucose tests every four hours
- ✓ Have the resident drink extra (calorie-free) liquids
- ✓ Weigh the resident each day
- ✓ Check the resident's temperature every morning and evening

* The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is recommending the following antiviral medications be used during the 2015-2016 flu season: Tamiflu[®] (oseltamivir), Relenza[®] (zanamivir), Rapivab[®] (peramivir).

Sources

1. CDC. What you should know for the 2015-2016 influenza season. www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/flu-season-2015-2016.htm. Published: Oct 2015. Accessed: Oct 2015.
 2. CDC. Influenza (Flu). www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm. Published: Oct 2015. Accessed: Oct 2015.
 3. CDC. Flu and people with diabetes. www.cdc.gov/flu/diabetes. Published: Aug 2015. Accessed: Oct 2015.
 4. CDC. Stay well in flu season. www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/flu/index.html. Published: Oct 2014. Accessed: Oct 2015.
 5. CDC. Diabetes and pneumonia: Get the facts. www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/pdfs/eng_facts.pdf. Accessed: 2015.
 6. CDC. Influenza antiviral medications: Summary for clinicians. www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/summary-clinicians.htm. Published: Feb 2015. Accessed: Oct 2015.
- Tamiflu is a trademark of Genentech USA, Inc. Relenza is a trademark of GlaxoSmithKline plc. Rapibab is a trademark of bioCLS Inc.