2009-2010
Influenza Vaccination Program

WFUBMC Flu Education
The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) requires accredited organizations to:
• Establish an on-site annual flu vaccination program
• Provide flu education
• Evaluate flu vaccination rates
• Increase flu vaccination participation

Flu transmission
• Flu (influenza) is a serious respiratory illness caused by a virus. It is not the common cold.
• It spreads from person to person mainly by coughing or sneezing, or sometimes by touching something with the virus on it.
• An infected person can spread the virus for approximately 1 day before they have any symptoms and for 5 days after their symptoms begin.
• 30-50% of infected people have no symptoms but can still spread the virus to others.
• The flu season can begin as early as October and end as late as May.

Flu diagnosis
• Flu tends to start suddenly. You may feel fine one hour and have a high fever the next.
• The first symptoms are usually:
  • chills and fever (often 101-103° F)
  • sweating
  • muscle aches
  • extreme tiredness
  • headache
• Symptoms soon to follow are:
  • runny nose and nasal congestion
  • cough
  • sore throat
  • eyes sensitive to light
  • nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea (more common in children than adults)
• Flu can usually be diagnosed from your symptoms although your healthcare provider may want to examine you if you have a health condition that would put you at risk from flu complications or, so he/she can rule out other types of infection. Your healthcare provider might use a rapid influenza test to confirm flu diagnosis.

Potential impact of the flu
• Flu can affect anyone but can be especially dangerous for the elderly and for people with long term health problems or weakened immune systems.
• Combined with pneumonia, flu is the 7th leading cause of death in the US.
• More than 30 million people seek medical attention for flu-related illness each year.
• On average, 36,000 people die each year from the flu and 226,000 are hospitalized.
**Flu vaccination**

- Flu shots help prevent the flu.
- Because the flu virus strain varies from year to year, you need to get a new flu shot every year.
- The CDC recommends flu vaccination for:
  - all children 6 months to 18 years
  - adults over 50 years of age
- People who are at risk from complications from the flu:
  - women who will be pregnant during the flu season
  - people with long-term health problems
  - people with weakened immune systems
  - children 6 months to 18 years of age on long-term aspirin treatment
  - residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities
  - people who live with or care for anyone in the above categories
- anyone who wants to reduce the likelihood of getting or spreading the flu
- The CDC’s flu vaccination recommendations include more than 220 million Americans (more than 2 out of 3 people)
- There are 2 types of flu vaccine:
  - Injectable (a shot injected into a muscle)
  - Intranasal (a mist sprayed into the nostrils)
    - The nasal spray form is for healthy, non-pregnant people age 2 through 49 years old.
- Flu vaccine is safe and effective. Mild side effects are possible.
- In both vaccine types, it takes up to 2 weeks after vaccination for protection to develop.
- You **cannot get the flu from either vaccine type.**

**Non-vaccine control measures**

- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.
- Clean your hands frequently, preferably with antibacterial soap from a clean dispenser.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. (Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth. Some germs can live for 2 hours or more on surfaces like doorknobs, desks, and tables.)
- Stay home when you are sick and check with your healthcare provider when needed.
- Practice other good health habits.
- During a flu outbreak your healthcare provider may prescribe medicine that can decrease your chances of getting the flu.