2017-2018 Flu Season – How to Stay Healthy

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This year the CDC is recommending Influenza vaccinations for 65+ year-old persons who have no contraindications, such as egg allergy and/or severe reactions to flu vaccines. There are new vaccines which are not produced in eggs.

There is a nasal spray with four **attenuated** viruses (a quadrivalent vaccine). The evaluation of the attenuated flu virus vaccine used during the 2015-2016 flu season was only 3% effective in preventing flu illness and therefore is no longer recommended for this coming flu season.

The new quadrivalent **dead** virus vaccine includes A/Michigan (H1N1), A/Hong Kong (H3N2), B/Brisbane, and B/Phuket. You can check with your health care provider which vaccine is recommended for you. Having a flu shot each year helps to maintain your resistance. Remember the flu virus changes with each flu season. Prevention is even more important at the end of the season. There is a new digital immune-assay and a rapid nucleic amplification test which can identify viruses. It takes only a 5-30 minute process. Early diagnosis and treatment can save lives.

A website that offers epidemiological information for your area is: www.Flunearyou.org, if you are interested. It may be important to avoid areas where large numbers of people congregate when flu is prevalent.

Remember to cover your cough and stay home if you have flu symptoms. Call your health care provider.