



ABSOLUTE SCOOP

DID YOU KNOW?

Absolute Pharmacy offers two options for supplying flu vaccines:

Bulk Program
We will deliver flu vaccine to your facility to be administered by nurses.

Clinic Program
We will come on-site to administer flu vaccine to your residents.



FALL VACCINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Written by Beth Husted, RPh, PharmD, Director of Pharmacy and Jenna Hessedence, CPhT, Assistant Manager of Customer Service

It is that time of year again... it's flu season! Although not as exciting as some of the upcoming events that fall brings, like tailgate parties and bonfires, getting ready for vaccine season is much like preparing for the big game. Do you have your party food and s'mores supplies ready to go? If not, let this serve as your reminder to start preparing for the fun, and we will take care of getting your facility ready for flu season along with getting you up to speed on some of the other vaccine updates you may see this fall.

Influenza (Flu)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to recommend annual flu vaccines for everyone 6 months and older. Since studies suggest there may be additional benefit for those 65 and older to receive a high dose or adjuvanted flu vaccine, the CDC now recommends that people over 65 should try to get one of these products. However, if one of these preferentially recommended vaccines are not available at the time of administration, individuals in this age group should get a standard flu vaccine. There are many circulating flu viruses, so the composition of the flu vaccine is reviewed and updated annually to best match what research suggests will prevent the most flu cases. Absolute Pharmacy will offer both regular and high-dose/adjuvanted (indicated for those 65 years of age and older) products this flu season. Flu is one of the leading causes of avoidable, costly hospital admissions for nursing facility residents, so please protect your residents and fellow employees by getting a flu shot this season!

Absolute Pharmacy is committed to making sure residents and staff will have the opportunity to receive or order flu vaccine. By now you should have received a flu vaccine order form. Absolute Pharmacy offers two options for supplying flu vaccines:

- Bulk Program: Absolute Pharmacy delivers flu vaccine to your facility to be administered by facility nurses.
- Clinic Program: Absolute Pharmacy will come on-site to administer flu vaccines to residents on a scheduled clinic date. A Customer Service Account Manager will work with you to schedule your flu clinic and bring the flu vaccines on-site that day.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

RSV is a common respiratory virus that presents like the common cold in most populations; however, older adults may experience more severe cases that can lead to hospitalizations. Vaccines are now available for this group to help protect them from severe RSV cases. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) states that adults ≥ 60 years of age may receive a single dose of the RSV vaccine, using shared clinical decision-making.



Unlike routine or risk-based (i.e. flu and COVID-19) recommendations, shared clinical decision-making does not target all persons in a particular age or risk group; instead, the decision to vaccinate for RSV should be based on a discussion between the healthcare provider and patient. The two, newly approved RSV vaccines are Abrysvo (Pfizer) and Arexvy (GSK). If the decision is made to vaccinate, either product can be provided as a one-time intramuscular injection. The RSV vaccine can also be co-administered with the flu vaccine.

Absolute Pharmacy will fulfill patient-specific orders for this vaccine to be administered by facility staff. Due to the nature of shared clinical decision-making recommendations, this vaccine cannot be administered in a clinic setting, as an order is needed to indicate that the patient and healthcare provider agree that the RSV vaccine is needed as part of the individual's care plan.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

COVID-19 cases are on the rise again and the CDC is tracking a new variant. Some of the best ways to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 include: being up-to-date on your COVID-19 vaccine, washing your hands, and staying home if you are sick. Currently, an individual is considered up-to-date if they have received one dose of a bivalent vaccine product; although not required, those 65 and older may receive a second bivalent booster 4 months after their first. The bivalent COVID-19 vaccines were purchased by the federal government and made available to everyone at no charge; however, we are anticipating the release of an updated vaccine product later this month. In addition to a new formulation, the vaccines will also only be commercially available. This means we will likely see not only updated recommendations but also a cost to obtain the products.

Absolute Pharmacy will share any official updates as the CDC and ACIP release them. Once guidance is issued, and the new commercialized products are available, we will transition to a more traditional dispensing model that is similar to our Bulk Program for flu vaccines.

Now that you have your fall vaccine plans ready to go, it's time to focus on getting ready for the fall festivities to begin.....**GO BUCKS!!**

About the Authors



Outside of work, Beth enjoys spending time with her 3 kids and husband. You can often find her on the soccer field & basketball court, or enjoying some white wine (lol).

Beth Husted, PharmD, RPh, is the Director of Pharmacy at Absolute. She joined us in early 2019 and quickly became a respected leader and trusted advisor. She initiated our "Follow Me Home" discharge program and took on leadership of the Consultant Pharmacists and their many clinical initiatives and services. During the pandemic, Beth led our COVID-19 vaccination efforts including acquisition of the vaccine to become a Phase 1A provider - one of nine LTC pharmacies nationally! Due to her success with the COVID-19 vaccine initiative, she quickly earned an honorary Queen of COVID Award. Beth is a graduate of Ohio Northern University.



Outside of work, Jenna loves spending time with her son, Owen and is a volunteer assistant coach for his Soccer team. Jenna is on her City Council, and heads up the East Sparta Playground committee. She enjoys taking road trips with her family!

Jenna Hessedence, CPhT, is the Assistant Manager of Customer Service. Jenna has been with Absolute for over 13 years! She began in Data Entry then moved to our Customer Service Team in 2015. Jenna wears many hats; she helps manage Customer Service, leads the pharmacy's annual Flu Vaccine Clinic Program and continues her role as Account Manager providing excellent service to our customers! Jenna has been recognized with awards for her amazing work ethic, most recently a Helping Hand Award.