

## Flu vaccinations are essential in protecting heart health during times of COVID-19 and flu.



Individuals with serious heart conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 and influenza. We have seen a concerning drop in emergency visits for cardiovascular events during the pandemic, and “routine” care is anything but routine. With flu season around the corner, vaccination is paramount to protecting heart health. Annual flu vaccinations can reduce the impact of flu-related illness in the population and also reduce the likelihood of cardiovascular events.

Million Hearts® and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have developed two short public service announcements (PSAs) to encourage individuals to seek emergency care for heart attack or stroke. Share and use the Million Hearts® [PSAs](#), [PSA Toolkit](#), and [PSA Social Graphics](#)!

Flu vaccines are a safe, effective way for **people with heart disease** to stay heart healthy. Offering vaccinations during health care visits and hospitalizations from September 2020 to January 2021 or later can help millions of Americans. Protect the heart health of your patients, employees, and communities during this flu season by:

- Assessing the vaccination status of patients and employees.
- Delaying vaccination for persons with any acute illness.
- Implementing strategies to address overdue vaccinations.

Please help us get the following messages out:

- Take your regular heart medications.
- Reach out to your medical team for questions and concerns.
- Seek emergency care when experiencing symptoms of a heart attack or stroke.
- Get a flu shot.

Your help and attention are needed now more than ever.

Yours in health,

Laurence Sperling, MD, FACC, FACP, FAHA, FASPC  
Executive Director, Million Hearts®

[Learn About Vaccination Guidance During a Pandemic](#)

## Tools You Can Use

### HealthMap Vaccine Finder can help locate nearby flu shot locations.

HealthMap Vaccine Finder is a free online service that identifies locations offering immunizations, including the flu vaccine. Users can search by address or ZIP code, select the vaccine they’re looking for, and learn more about which vaccines they might need.

### CDC provides influenza surveillance reports.

The CDC collects and analyzes data on U.S. and international flu activity. It also offers FluView Interactive, which allows users to create customized flu visualizations across flu seasons, regions, age groups, and other demographics.

### Release the Pressure (RTP) supports Black women with hypertension.

RTP provides resources to help Black women check in with support systems, monitor blood pressure, and develop personalized wellness plans to virtually manage heart health. [Take the pledge](#) to be part of a healthy blood pressure movement.

### AirNow website and app can help protect heart health.

Air pollution can affect heart health and trigger heart attacks and strokes. The redesigned AirNow website and app provide location-specific data on current air quality, air quality forecast, and air quality trends, as well as fire and smoke maps.

### YMCA of the USA and Safe Routes Partnership develop 2020 state report cards.

Physical activity is essential for heart health, and supportive laws, policies, and funding decisions can make a big difference. The Safe Routes Partnership’s report cards give a snapshot of each state’s support for walking, bicycling, and physical activity.

### Updated Million Hearts® Tobacco Cessation Change Package (TCCP) features a new message from the Surgeon General.

The TCCP includes a foreword from U.S. Surgeon General Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH, encouraging health systems to implement evidence-based process improvements to optimize tobacco dependence treatment. The new release offers updated links, so download your copy today!

## Quick Fact

About half (47.2%) of adults hospitalized with flu during the 2018–2019 flu season had heart disease.  
—CDC

## Million Hearts® in the Community

### Million Hearts® PSAs stress the importance of heart health during a pandemic.

Million Hearts® has developed two PSAs to highlight the importance of heart health during the pandemic. Share these 30-second PSAs to encourage people to maintain heart health and seek immediate emergency care for symptoms of a heart attack or stroke.

### Study finds that clinical-community care models can support SMBP.

A new study published in the *Journal of Community Health* confirms that clinical and community partners can design unique programs to help patients incorporate SMBP into their care regimen.

### Association of Black Cardiologists (ABC) collaborates with Johnson & Johnson on Heartline study.

ABC is partnering with Heartline to research heart health among people **who are 65 or older and use an iPhone**. The study aims to determine whether using an Apple Watch to detect new-onset atrial fibrillation (AFib) can improve cardiovascular outcomes.

### CDC’s Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO) releases a new graphic on physical activity and cancer.

DNPAO has developed a new graphic to show that being physically active lowers your risk for developing eight commonly occurring cancers. [View and share the graphic!](#)

### CMS Understanding Clinical Quality Measures Webinar Takes Place in September.

Join the *Understanding Clinical Quality Measures: How CMS is Modernizing its Approach to Digital Measurement* webinar in September. The webinar will take place on September 15 from 2–3 p.m. ET and on September 17 from 3–4 p.m. ET.

## The Science of Million Hearts®

### Study shows that one in eight adults hospitalized with influenza had acute cardiac events. (*Ann Intern Med*)

### Heart attack hospitalizations decreased by nearly half of normal weekly rate during COVID-19 pandemic. (*N Engl J Med*)

### Review explores current understanding of COVID-19 and its interaction with the cardiovascular system. (*Nature*)

### Considerations for angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 in cardiovascular disease and ramifications for the control of COVID-19. (*Hypertension*)

### Chronic disease prevention should continue to be a high priority during the pandemic and beyond. (*Cardiovasc Endocrinol Metab*)

## Do This!

### Watch the COCA Webinar on Flu Season Recommendations.

CDC shares recommendations for 2020–2021 influenza vaccination season in its Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA) webinar. Topics range from standards for adult immunization practice, flu vaccination planning, general vaccination guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic, and guidance for large vaccination clinics held in satellite, temporary, or off-site locations. Check out the COCA webinar to learn more!