



**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
**October 2, 2008**

**Subject: Media can help give a shot in the arm to the annual Influenza Campaign!**

Every year in Canada, Seasonal Influenza and its complications lead to an average 4,000 deaths and 20,000 hospitalizations. Influenza typically lasts for 7-10 days, but the cough and weakness may continue for up to 6 weeks. Media across Canada can help reduce these numbers by encouraging everyone to get a flu shot this fall.

The *Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion* (CCIAP) is inviting broadcast, print and web media to include a 30-second PSA or print message (resources found on [influenza.cpha.ca](http://influenza.cpha.ca)) in your line-up during October, November, December and January. If you should use these resources, we ask that you contact us so we can measure the uptake of our ads.

*Seasonal influenza*, commonly known as the flu, is an infection in the airways caused by the influenza virus. It's called 'seasonal' influenza because the virus circulates annually in the winter season in Canada. It should not be confused with avian or pandemic influenza.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends immunization for anyone who wants to reduce the risk of getting and spreading influenza. Although the influenza vaccine is not free for everyone in Canada, it usually costs less than \$20 to get immunized – a small price to pay for the best protection against influenza.

Media plays a vital role in reminding all Canadians about the importance of annual immunization and how it can help protect those at risk of serious complications. For every Canadian who hears or reads this message and is motivated to get immunized, we are one step closer to reducing deaths and illness.

**Thank you** for your consideration and your support in informing Canadians about the importance of annual immunization against influenza. October is Influenza Immunization Awareness Month across Canada.

**Media Enquiries:**

Angela Slobodian  
Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion  
(613) 725-3769 ext. 151 / Email: [immunize@cpha.ca](mailto:immunize@cpha.ca)

or

**Contact your local public health office.**

### **About the Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion:**

The Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion is a coalition of national health and consumer groups committed to the promotion of immunization as the best way to prevent influenza. The goal of the annual campaign is to increase immunization rates by promoting the benefits of influenza immunization for all ages.

[immunize.ca](http://immunize.ca)

### **More links and backgrounders:**

The Public Health Agency of Canada

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/influenza-eng.php>

Provincial and Territorial ministries of health and regional health authorities

<http://www.immunize.cpha.ca/en/publications-resources/links.aspx>

### **Who should be immunized?**

1) People at high risk of influenza related complications including adults and children with

- cardiac or pulmonary disorders including asthma
- diabetes mellitus & other metabolic diseases
- cancer, immunodeficiency, immunosuppression (due to underlying disease and/or therapy)
- renal disease
- anemia or hemoglobinopathy
- conditions that compromise the management of respiratory secretions
- children & adolescents with conditions treated for long periods with acetylsalicylic acid
- all residents of nursing homes & other chronic care facilities
- adults aged 65 years or older
- children aged 6 to 23 months
- pregnant women

2) People capable of transmitting influenza to those at high risk of complications including

- health system workers and other caregivers who could transmit to those at high risk
- household contacts of infants less than 6 months old
- household contacts of those at high risk
- pregnant women in their third trimester especially and women at all stages of pregnancy, and breastfeeding mothers
- those providing regular child care to children 0 to 23 months
- those who provide services within closed settings to persons at high risk

3) Others

- people who provide essential community services
- people in direct contact with avian influenza infected poultry during culling
- **healthy people aged 2 to 64 years should be encouraged to receive the vaccine even if they are not in the above groups**