The Link Between Flu and CVD: The Full Story

Vaccination

For the 2017-2018 flu season, vaccination prevented:
- 7 million flu illnesses
- Over 100,000 flu-related hospitalizations
- 8,000 flu deaths

A study of nearly 30 million hospital records showed:
- Flu shot during hospitalization ▼ 10% Lower heart attack risk
- Annual vaccination early in flu season ▼ Lower mortality risk

Fewer than 4 in 10 adults get a flu shot1
1 in 5 Americans gets the flu each year
Lower vaccination rates for adults aged 50-64 years despite underlying conditions
Vaccination rates are consistently only 68% for adults aged ≥65 years

Flu Shots and the Heart

People with CVD:2
- 10x higher risk of MI within 3 days of getting the flu
- More likely to have MI even weeks after the flu

Annual Influenza Vaccination

Benefits for CVD Patients:3
- Lower Risk of MACE ▼ 36%

Benefits for HF:3
- Lower Mortality Risk ▼ 50% flu season
- Lower CVD-related Hospitalization ▼ 22%

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The Role of the CV Clinician

Recommend

- Identify candidates for vaccination in EMR or during office visits
- Suggest annual vaccination early in the flu season (September to October)4

Inform

- Educate patients on the need and benefits
- Have ongoing conversations with patients about the impact of getting vaccinated on their CV health
- Be proactive in broadcasting the message to patients outside of clinical visits

Take Action

- Employ protocols and standing orders for flu vaccine
- Add reminders at check-in, within your EMR, and on patient visit summary documents
- Provide CV team training at the start of each flu season

Call To Action

Recommend influenza vaccination during regular office visits as a safe and cost-effective CV intervention. For additional resources, visit www.ACC.org/FluVaccine.

Abbreviations: CV : Cardiovascular | EMR : Electronic Medical Record | HF : Heart Failure | MACE : Major Adverse Cardiac Events | MI : Myocardial Infarction.

References:

Educational Grant Support Provided by: Sanofi Pasteur, Inc.