

THE DANGERS OF INFLUENZA (FLU): WHY PEOPLE WITH HEART DISEASE NEED TO GET VACCINATED

15+
million

US adults diagnosed with **heart disease**, putting them at high risk for flu-related complications



SERIOUS COMPLICATIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- **10X** increased risk of heart attack within 3 days of flu infection
- Inflammation in the body that leads to increased risk of heart attack even weeks after acute flu infection
- Hospitalization
- Increased risk of stroke
- Permanent physical decline/loss of independence
- Higher risk of death

ANNUAL FLU VACCINATION IMPROVES OUTCOMES

Annual flu vaccination reduces risk for cardiovascular events by 53 percent for individuals who had a heart attack in the last year and by 36 percent for individuals with pre-existing heart disease.

EDUCATE AND MOTIVATE PATIENTS

INFORM patients with heart disease about the serious dangers of flu and **INSIST** they get vaccinated each year!

Inform patients with heart disease of potential complications of flu:

- Worsening of chronic health condition
- Triggering a heart attack or stroke
- Threatening their level of independence

Create a practical reminder tied to the fall season to ensure that patients schedule an office visit to discuss the importance of annual flu prevention

Providers who are unable to provide flu vaccine on-site should write a “prescription” for flu vaccine to signal the importance and urgency of the recommendation

All healthcare professionals have a role in protecting adults with chronic health conditions from flu

Visit www.nfid.org/flu-chronic-health-conditions for additional resources