

<b>Section:</b> UTMB On-line Documentation	<b>01.17 - Policy</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Healthcare Epidemiology Policies and Procedures	<b>Rev. 11.10.10</b>
<b>Topic:</b> Influenza Vaccination	<b>1980 - Author</b>

## 01.17 Influenza Vaccination

**Purpose** Since 1984, the Immunization Practices Advisory Committee (ACIP) has made strong recommendations for the prevention and control of influenza. These include a recommendation that healthcare workers be immunized.

This policy, for immunization of healthcare workers at UTMB, is proposed for three reasons:

- Nosocomial outbreaks occur during influenza season and a well immunized work force is less likely to transmit influenza to the patients who are under their care;
- Immunization should minimize absenteeism during influenza outbreaks;
- Influenza can be a serious disease and should not be confused with a cold or a bout of “intestinal flu.” Immunization provides the best personal protection for each employee.

**Audience** All healthcare workers in UTMB hospitals and clinics

- Policy**
- All employees of UTMB will be offered the vaccine free of charge.
  - All UTMB healthcare workers will be offered the influenza vaccine on an annual basis. Healthcare Workers are defined as workers who provide care in patient rooms or clinics and those who work in areas to which patients are transported for diagnostic and treatment procedures, e.g. radiology, endoscopy, etc.
  - Healthcare workers who decline the offer of influenza vaccine must sign a declination statement. (see attached declination form)
  - Healthcare workers who have a medical contraindication to receipt of the influenza vaccine, i.e. allergy to eggs, etc. will also be required to sign a declination statement.
  - Healthcare workers who decline influenza vaccine or who have a medical contraindication to receipt of the influenza vaccine will be required to wear a surgical mask while working with patients during the influenza season.
  - Healthcare workers who have been vaccinated with influenza vaccine will be given a button, sticker or some other form of identification to wear that provides visual, public verification of their vaccination status.
  - Healthcare workers who do not wear an identifier documenting influenza vaccination will be required to wear a surgical mask while on duty during a specified period each influenza season to be determined based on seasonal influenza activity.

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- Healthcare workers who receive their influenza vaccine at a facility outside of UTMB may receive credit for that vaccination if they provide written documentation from the facility where they were vaccinated.
- When the latter healthcare workers submit their documentation for influenza vaccination at an outside facility to the Employee Health Service, they will receive the identifier documenting their influenza vaccine status.
- Employees  $\geq$  65 years of age will be offered the high dose licensed influenza vaccine. If they decline the high dose vaccine, they will be offered the standard influenza vaccine.
- Healthcare workers not wearing their influenza identifier and not wearing a surgical mask during the specified period may be referred to their department leader, the Chief Medical Officer and/or the Chief of Healthcare Epidemiology.

- References
1. CDC. Prevention and control of influenza with vaccines. Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), 2010. MMWR.59 (Early Release) July 29, 2010:1-62.

