



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES NATIONAL INFLUENZA CONSUMER SURVEY: MOTHERS

Mothers Report High Intentions to Vaccinate Children Yet Misconceptions Still Cause Some to Influenza Avoid Vaccination

Last year's influenza season was particularly tough on our nation's children. During the 2009 – 2010 influenza season, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported an estimated 1,280 pediatric deaths from influenza. But, infants and young children are actually at increased risk of complications from influenza in any year. For the past three years, recommendations from the CDC have called for vaccination of all children 6 months through 18 years of age. As of this year, the recommendation has been expanded to every adult, too. Pediatric vaccination rates among children have been slowly increasing, but there is much progress to be made.

The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) and its *Childhood Influenza Immunization Coalition (CIIC)* conducted a survey to gain a better understanding of perceptions and behaviors surrounding influenza and influenza vaccination among mothers of children 6 months through 18 years of age to strive to increase vaccination rates and ensure all children are protected.

Key Findings

Despite last year's unique influenza environment, most mothers remain *unchanged* in their vaccine intentions

- Eight in 10 (80 percent) report no change in their feelings about vaccinating their child(ren) for influenza this year
 - 65 percent indicate a positive intent to have their child(ren) vaccinated
 - Of those, nearly half (49 percent) report no change in their intention and will likely vaccinate their child(ren), as they have in the past
 - 33 percent are unlikely to vaccinate their child(ren) this year
 - Of those, nearly one-third (31 percent) report no change in their intention and will likely not vaccinate their child(ren), as they have in the past
 - 2 percent say they remain undecided

Of the minority of mothers (18 percent) who reported a shift in vaccination intentions this year, the vast majority have shifted *toward* influenza vaccination

- 88 percent of mothers who shifted in opinion are more likely to have their child(ren) vaccinated this year
- Only 2 percent of mothers who shifted their opinion are less likely to have their child(ren) vaccinated this year

Mothers seek childhood influenza vaccination not only to protect their child(ren) and families, but to eliminate their own concern about this serious disease

- A desire to protect family (96 percent), community (95 percent) and children with underlying health issues (95 percent) were top reasons cited by mothers in favor of childhood influenza vaccination
- Mothers believe the influenza vaccine is a way to provide optimal protection against a serious disease that can hospitalize (93 percent) or kill (92 percent) children
- Three-quarters (75 percent) favor influenza vaccination to eliminate the worry of seeing their child severely ill and in pain
- For a majority of mothers (90 percent), the ability to lessen influenza severity, even if their child is not totally protected is a motivator for influenza vaccination
- More than seven in 10 mothers (71 percent) reported that H1N1 heightened awareness that influenza can be serious for children, making them more interested in childhood influenza vaccination

The age of children plays a role in mothers' vaccination intentions

- The intent to vaccinate is highest for mothers of children under 6 years of age (76 percent) and lowest for mothers of children 12 – 17 years of age (57 percent)

Previous family experience with influenza leads to a greater intent to vaccinate this year

- 70 percent of mothers in families where a child has had influenza are more likely or likely to vaccinate their child(ren) this year
- 56 percent of mothers in families where no one has had influenza are more likely or likely to vaccinate their child(ren) this year

Pediatricians and other primary care providers are mothers' favored source for influenza vaccination information

- Nearly seven in 10 mothers (69 percent) would *first* turn to their child's pediatrician for information
- Just over one in 10 (11 percent) would *first* turn to their own health care provider
- The top three sources of information mentioned are pediatrician (82 percent), own primary care physician (82 percent) and pharmacist (50 percent)

More information about the vaccine or a stronger recommendation from a health care professional could motivate more mothers to vaccinate their child(ren) against influenza

- Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) report that reassurance that the vaccine is carefully tested to prove safety would make them more interested in vaccinating their child(ren) this year
- A strong recommendation from a pediatrician would make a majority (73 percent) more interested in vaccination
- Seven in 10 (71 percent) reported that the knowledge that this year's influenza vaccine will provide protection against H1N1 might make them more interested in vaccinating their child(ren)
- If mothers had a better understanding of how the influenza vaccine works to build a child's immunity, almost three-quarters (70 percent) might be more interested in vaccination
- More information about number of strains in the vaccine (69 percent) and vaccine ingredients (61 percent) might make mothers more likely to vaccinate

A lack of knowledge of how the influenza vaccine works may prevent mothers from vaccinating their child(ren)

- Nearly seven in 10 (68 percent) believe hand washing works just as well – or better – than vaccination to prevent influenza
- Almost two-thirds (63 percent) believe that influenza vaccine protects against only one type of influenza – or strain – each year

About the survey

This survey was conducted on behalf of NFID by Opinion Research Corporation CARAVAN® Omnibus. The results are based on telephone interviews conducted August 12 – 25, 2010 among a national sample of 505 mothers of children ages 6 months through 18 years. Additional interviews were conducted with 104 African –American mothers and 100 Hispanic mothers. Margin of error is ± 4 percent for the larger sample of 505 mothers; ± 10 percent for the African-American and Hispanic mothers.

About NFID

The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) is a non-profit, tax-exempt (501c3) organization founded in 1973 and dedicated to educating the public and health care professionals about the causes, treatment and prevention of infectious diseases. NFID established the *Childhood Influenza Immunization Coalition (CIIC)* in 2007 to help increase awareness and education about pediatric influenza and benefits of immunization. *Coalition* members include more than 30 of the nation's leading public health, medical, patient and parent groups. The *Coalition* is made possible through an unrestricted educational grant to NFID from sanofi pasteur.

More information can be found at www.PreventChildhoodInfluenza.org and www.nfid.org.

October 2010