

## Help Get Eligible Pharmacy Patients Vaccinated



Immunization rates in the United States remain well under the Healthy People 2020 target, translating to about 56,000 deaths in the U.S. each year that could have been prevented through vaccinations.<sup>1</sup>

As a go-to destination for care and seasonal illness prevention, your pharmacy can provide low-cost vaccinations, along with a respectable amount of education regarding how

vaccines work, what their main functions are, and why it is essential to get vaccinated. If your pharmacy is certified to immunize, here are five key steps you can take this season to help your patients get the protection afforded by vaccination.

### **Tip 1: Flag the Bag**

Flag the bag to identify patients eligible for vaccination. You can put a sheet of stickers on prescription bags to let patients know they should talk with you about immunizations. Here's a [label template](#)<sup>2</sup> (courtesy of Merck Vaccines) you can download and utilize in your pharmacy. Prescription bag stuffers can also be used in conjunction with prescription bag stickers to prompt conversations about the flu shot and other appropriate vaccines with your patients.

### **Tip 2: Share Key Phrases**

When speaking with patients, you should shape a clear and personal recommendation by sharing key phrases that can help deliver a clear vaccination recommendation. For example, the phrase "This vaccine may help prevent this disease," helps patients understand that the vaccine you are recommending may help protect them against potentially severe disease. Or you can say, "I believe you should get this vaccine," lets your patients know they can trust you as a health care provider. Patients want more than just the facts about vaccination; they want to know why you recommend it for them.

### Tip 3: Address Co-Pay Concerns

It is important to help patients understand insurance reimbursement options and address their vaccination co-pay concerns. Ask for their Medical Insurance Card or verify medical insurance in the pharmacy management system. If the claim can be adjudicated and the patient accepts the recommendation, proceed to the vaccination bill claim through medical insurance. If you are not able to adjudicate through medical insurance, then explain the cost to the patient. If the patient decides not to get the vaccine, refer the patient to the physician's office and flag it in your management system for follow up.

### Tip 4: Do 2 in 1

Discuss the administration of 2 vaccines in 1 visit with your patients. Scientific data shows that getting several vaccines at the same time does not cause any chronic health problems.<sup>3</sup> You can also educate patients on combination vaccines. Combination vaccines are two or more different vaccines combined into a single shot. Examples of combination vaccines are DTap (diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis), trivalent IPV (three strains of the inactivated polio vaccine), MMR (measles-mumps-rubella), DTap-Hib, and Hib-Hep B.

### Tip 5: Repeat Yourself

Repeat recommendation discussions to ensure eligible patients get vaccinated. Make a clear recommendation to patients using unambiguous language. Share a personal experience or story about the disease. Follow up with patients who may initially accept a recommendation but who remain unvaccinated. Contact physicians whenever appropriate for more information.

### Closing Thoughts

Providing vaccination services and education can translate into a healthier population, which increases the pharmacy's ability to provide better outcomes for their patients, as well as additional revenue for the pharmacy.

Not sure where to start? Through our partnership with Aspire Health, Keystone has the tools to help you identify eligible patients, initiate conversations, educate, recommend, and vaccinate eligible patients. To learn more, please connect with your Keystone Business Consultant via email at [info@kpparx.com](mailto:info@kpparx.com).

*This blog helps support our partnership with Merck Vaccines. For more tools and resources, please visit [www.MerckVaccines.com](http://www.MerckVaccines.com).*

#### Sources:

- 1) <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/immunization-and-infectious-diseases>
- 2) <https://www.merckvaccines.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2020/03/US-NON-03167.pdf>
- 3) <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/concerns/multiple-vaccines-immunity.html>