

Protect Your Patients and Provide Timely Immunizations; Including Patients on Statins

August is Immunization Awareness Month and Immunizations help prevent dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

As your practice begins to ramp up for the upcoming 2018-2019 flu season, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) have great resources for education and promotion of immunizations for healthcare partners. There are [materials available for free download](#) and select [materials available to order](#).

Be prepared to answer questions from your patients. A recent issue related to immunizations has surfaced over the past couple of years. There is some concern related to cholesterol-lowering statin medications affecting the efficacy of influenza vaccines. This has raised the possibility that statin medications may blunt the effectiveness of influenza vaccines in seniors.

Experts caution that more research is needed to understand the issue better. The influenza vaccine remains the best protection against influenza and provides a level of protection for people who take statins. **Patients should still receive an influenza vaccine to be protected.**

No changes have been made to the [CDC recommendation for influenza vaccine or other immunizations](#).

Reach out for Cholesterol Management and Immunization Guidance

[atom Alliance](#) can assist best practices for cholesterol management and immunization best practices and has a [free resource library for adult immunizations](#) that provides tools and resources for caregivers to help improve immunization rates and quality of life.

The [American College of Cardiology \(ACC\)](#) shares on its website that the good news is that the flu vaccine helps protect against heart events, reducing risk for heart attack by 19 to 45 percent.

Rather than viewing the vaccine as a means for preventing the flu, we should begin to consider the flu shot as a way to help prevent heart attack.

The influenza vaccine remains the best protection against influenza and provides at least some protection in people who take statins, so patients should still receive an influenza vaccine to be protected and continue to take their statins to reduce their cholesterol.

Similarly, pneumococcal disease is serious and deadly. Approximately one million adults in the US are thought to get pneumococcal pneumonia every year and 5 to 7 percent of them die.

Fewer people will get pneumococcal meningitis and bloodstream infection, but the mortality rate in this group is higher (10 percent or more) and increases even more in people age 65 and older.

It is also important to share with your patients that having the flu increases the chances of getting pneumococcal disease. Pneumococcal and influenza vaccines, as well hepatitis B vaccines, are fully paid for by Medicare Part B.

Our services are free, and we offer many educational tools to assist. For more guidance, contact:

www.atomAlliance.org

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