



December Health and Wellness Observances

The Health & Well-being Work Group has reviewed several sources of information on national health-related observances held throughout the year, with the objective of selecting activities of interest to our employer members. These tools, educational resources and other relevant information are shared with our members in advance to support workforce education and communication activities. The spotlighted observances for December appear below and in the Members Only section at www.gpbch.org.

National Handwashing Awareness Week (December 1st – 7th)

As identified by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Practicing hand hygiene is a simple yet effective way to prevent infections. Cleaning your hands can prevent the spread of germs, including those that are resistant to antibiotics and are becoming difficult, if not impossible, to treat. On average, healthcare providers clean their hands less than half of the times they should. On any given day, about one in 31 hospital patients has at least one healthcare-associated infection."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, you should clean hands:

- After you have been in a public place and touched an item or surface that may be frequently touched by other people, such as door handles, tables, gas pumps, shopping carts, or electronic cashier registers/screens, etc.
- Before touching your eyes, nose, or mouth because that's how germs enter our bodies.

Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings

As a patient in a healthcare setting, you are at risk of getting an infection while you are being treated for something else. Patients and their loved ones can play a role in asking and reminding healthcare providers to clean their hands. Your hands can spread germs too, so protect yourself by cleaning your hands often.

<https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/patients/index.html>

Protect yourself by asking questions:

Don't be afraid to use your voice: **it's ok to ask your healthcare provider questions**, such as:

- "I didn't see you clean your hands when you came in, would you mind cleaning them again before you examine me?"
- "I'm worried about germs spreading in the hospital. Will you please clean your hands once more before you start my treatment?"



Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: provides hand-hygiene advice for patients and providers. <https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/>

Additional Resource: For handouts and brochures, check out the CDC's Clean Hands Count Campaign: <https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/campaign/promotional.html>

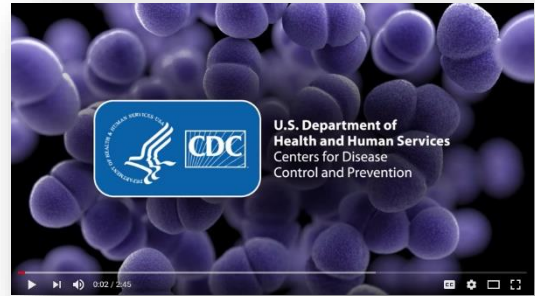


National Influenza (Flu) Vaccination Week (December 6th – 12th)

The National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) is a national awareness week focused on highlighting the importance of influenza vaccination. It was established by the CDC in 2005 to highlight the importance of continuing flu vaccination through the holiday season and beyond. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/resource-center/nivw/about.htm>

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the **nose, throat**, and sometimes the **lungs**. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. People who have flu often feel some or all of **these symptoms**: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, and sometimes diarrhea & vomiting.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm>



[What is the difference between Influenza \(Flu\) and COVID-19?](#)

CDC Preventive Steps: Take a look at CDC's list of ways you can prevent the flu. These steps also include information on **COVID-19 prevention**: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/consumer/prevention.htm>

Flu Vaccination for People at High Risk

A goal of NIVW is to communicate the importance of flu vaccination for people who are at high risk for developing [flu-related complications](#). To see if you are at a high risk of infection, view the full list: [People at High Risk of Developing Flu-Related Complications](#).

CDC Digital Media Toolkit: 2020-21 Flu Season

CDC's seasonal flu vaccination campaign materials are available to assist partners in communicating about the importance of vaccination. This digital toolkit includes details on events/activities, sample social media and newsletter content, graphics, web assets, and media prep material. This material is downloadable, shareable, and some of the material is customizable.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/resource-center/toolkit/index.htm>

NIVW Key Messages & Free Resources

CDC has developed a number of tools and materials to organizations across the country in their vaccination efforts during National Influenza Vaccination Week: [NIVW Communication Resources](#).

[Click here to access the December Spotlighted Observance](#) – Prevent the Seasonal Flu. This document is a ready-to-distribute flyer for your employees and colleagues.

Additional Resources:

[Flu and You](#)

[Get Vaccinated](#)

[Key Facts about Flu](#)

