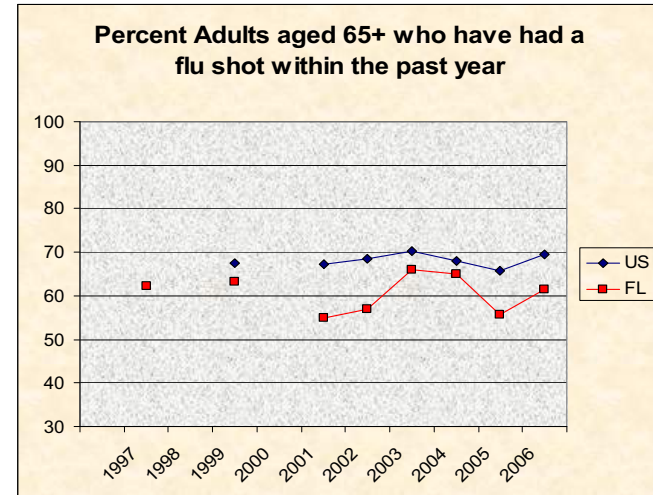


# Influenza Immunization Rate for Adults aged 65+

*Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness that can cause severe complications and, at times, death. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccination each year. Immunization has proven to be one of the most cost-effective public health interventions.*

## Why is this Important?

- Immunization is one of public health's leading health indicators and primary defense against deadly and debilitating diseases, such as influenza. Influenza is responsible for an average of approximately 114,000 hospitalizations and 20,000 deaths/year in the United States. In 2005, approximately 3.0 million persons aged 65 and older lived in Florida. Influenza and pneumonia together were the eighth leading cause of death in Florida in 2004, with over 3,000 deaths statewide.
- Increasing the influenza vaccine coverage rate among adults aged 65 and older will decrease disease, decrease hospital length-of-stay, decrease medical costs, and increase quality of life.



Year	US	Florida
1997	*	62.3
1998	*	*
1999	67.6	63.3
2000	*	*
2001	67.3	54.9
2002	68.6	57
2003	70.2	65.9
2004	68	65.1
2005	65.7	55.6
2006	69.6	61.5

\* Data Not available if the unweighted sample size for the denominator was < 50 or the CI half width was > 10 for any cell, or if the state did not collect data for that calendar year. Source: The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

## Influenza Immunization Rate For Adults Aged 65+ cont'd

### How is Florida Doing?

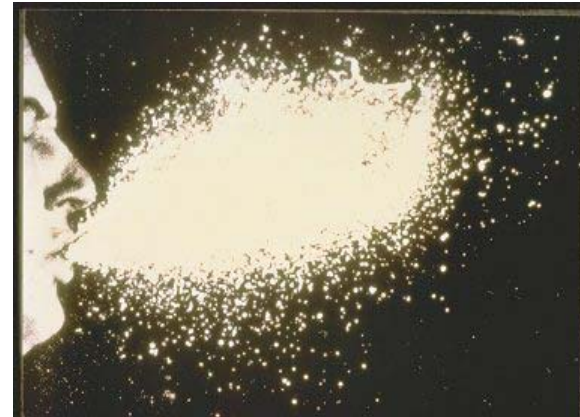
- In a national survey for Florida, data indicates only 61.5% of adults aged 65+ had a flu shot within the past year, significantly lower than the Healthy People 2010 goal of 90%.
- Florida legislation requires influenza immunization of residents in nursing homes aged 65 or older during the influenza season.
- Florida legislation requires influenza immunization of patients aged 65 or older in hospitals (prior to discharge) during the influenza season.

1918 influenza epidemic



Courtesy of the National Museum of Health and Medicine, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Washington, D.C., Image NCP 1603

Influenza



Courtesy of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## *Influenza Immunization Rate for Adults aged 65+ cont'd*

### What Influences Prevention of Influenza in Adults 65+?

- Availability of immunization services, reimbursement by insurance, or reasonable cost
- Education on influenza vaccine and immunization recommendations
- Giving all immunizations that an adult aged 65 or older needs at each visit

### What is the State's Role?

#### States Can

- Provide influenza vaccine annually to at-risk patients seeking influenza immunization services at county health departments.
- Impact health care decisions, messaging, and health practices of Floridians by promoting influenza prevention activities.
- Provide additional nurse positions in counties with a high population of persons aged 65 or older to promote influenza vaccine awareness and administration.
- Coordinate with the statewide Florida Flu and Pneumonia Coalition, and other organizations to increase influenza immunization coverage levels for adults aged 65 and older.
- Encourage all providers to use the state immunization registry to track immunizations for adults aged 65 and older.
- Encourage providers to send annual reminders for flu vaccine to their patients.

### Florida Initiatives

**National Influenza Vaccination Week (scheduled during November)**, National, State, and local partners work together to promote the importance of influenza immunizations.

**National Adult Immunization Awareness Week (scheduled during late September)** National, State, and local partners work together to promote the importance of adult immunizations.

#### **National Immunization Awareness Month—August**

National, State, and local partners encourage communities to plan local health screenings or fairs, media events and other related immunization outreach efforts to promote the benefits of immunizations.

#### **State Immunization Registry**

Florida SHOTS (State Health Online Tracking System) is a statewide immunization database that helps physicians, schools, and parents keep track of immunization records.