

# Talking Points on Flu Prevention



**VALUE  
HEALTH**  
PROTECT AGAINST  
**INFLUENZA**

- Flu season is here and it's nothing to sneeze at.
- We have been hearing a lot about avian or bird flu, but so far, the H5N1 strain has not reached this country.
- H5N1 mainly affects birds and poultry, and is not easily spread from person to person.
- The concern is that in the future, the virus could mutate into one that passes easily from person to person.
- Seasonal flu, however, is very real, here and now. It comes every year and every year approximately 36,000 Americans die from complications.
- Fortunately, there are many things you can do to prevent seasonal flu — and to keep from giving it to others.
- The single best way to prevent flu is vaccination.
- Flu vaccines are available at *(insert appropriate community information)*.
- It's especially important for children over 6 months, pregnant women, the elderly and people with chronic illnesses to get vaccines.
- There are two types of vaccines — the “flu shot” and the nasal spray vaccine. No, neither one of them can give you the flu, though a small subset of people might get a slight fever after receiving the vaccine.
- In addition to a vaccine, there are a number of steps you can take to prevent flu — common courtesies that are simple but truly effective:
  - ✓ Wash your hands with soap and warm water often, especially before and after you eat or after you use the bathroom.
  - ✓ Cough or sneeze into your arm or sleeve, not your hands.
  - ✓ Stay home from work if you think you have the flu and keep your kids out of the school if they might have it.
  - ✓ Keep tissues and sanitizing gel or wipes handy — for your hands and for surfaces like telephones that are touched by numerous people.