



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Did you miss getting your flu shot? It's not too late!**

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Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is a highly contagious infection of the airways caused by the influenza virus.

"Some people think that influenza is a mild illness, but it can be a very serious illness in some people," says Dr. Susan Bowles, Chair of Immunize Canada. "While most people recover within a week or two, people over 65 years of age and children or adults with underlying chronic conditions can have more serious complications like pneumonia."

"The most effective way to protect yourself from getting influenza is to get vaccinated," states Dr. Bowles. "It is a safe and effective way to prevent spreading the virus where you live, work and play."

Studies repeatedly demonstrate that influenza immunization reduces the number of hospitalizations and visits to health care providers and is effective in preventing influenza-associated deaths. "People who do not get immunized are at risk of infection from the influenza virus and can also infect others," says Dr. Shelly McNeil, Vice-Chair of Immunize Canada.

All children from 6 months to 5 years of age, people 65 years of age and older and people at any age with chronic medical conditions placing them at risk of influenza-related complications, and people capable of transmitting influenza to high risk individuals should be immunized against influenza.

Influenza activity is increasing in Canada and it is not too late to protect yourself and those around you by getting immunized. All Canadians are encouraged to talk to their doctor, nurse, pharmacist or public health office about getting this year's influenza vaccine.

**Don't sit on the sidelines this year... get your flu shot. Not the flu.**

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#### **Media Enquiries**

Lucie Marisa Bucci  
Immunize Canada

(613) 725-3769, ext.151 / Email: [immunize@cpha.ca](mailto:immunize@cpha.ca)



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### **About Immunize Canada**

Immunize Canada is a national non-governmental coalition and a trustworthy and independent voice in support of immunization of children, adolescents, adults and health care professionals. Its overall aim is to increase awareness about the benefits of immunization and promote the understanding and use of vaccines as recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI).

The goal of Immunize Canada's annual influenza campaign is to increase immunization rates in Canada by promoting the benefits of influenza immunization for all ages. For more information, please visit: [immunize.ca](http://immunize.ca)