

August 2025

Federal Employee Program

Promoting Flu Vaccination and Judicious Antibiotic Use for Acute Bronchitis

As we approach the upcoming flu season, the Florida Blue Federal Employee Program® (FEP) would like to emphasize two critical topics that can significantly impact patient outcomes: flu vaccinations strategies and the appropriate treatment of acute bronchitis.

Flu Vaccination: Protecting Your Patients and Communities

Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is a contagious respiratory illness that can cause mild to severe symptoms, particularly among vulnerable populations, such as older adults, young children, and those with certain chronic health conditions. The vaccine is the most effective way to prevent the flu and its complications.

To ensure patients receive the best care possible:

- Offer flu vaccines to all patients 6 months of age and older, with a focus on high-risk populations.
- Administer flu vaccines by the end of October, if possible, to provide optimal protection throughout the flu season.
- Use evidence-based strategies to improve flu vaccination rates, such as patient reminders, standing orders, and vaccine clinics.

Acute Bronchitis: Antibiotic Awareness

Acute bronchitis is a common respiratory illness characterized by a persistent cough, often accompanied by mucus. While antibiotics may be necessary for some bacterial infections, they are not effective against viral infections, which are the most common causes of acute bronchitis.

To promote judicious antibiotic use and reduce the risk of antibiotic resistance:

- Reserve antibiotic prescriptions for patients with confirmed bacterial infections or those at high risk for complications.
- Consider alternative treatments, such as over-the-counter medications and pulmonary rehabilitation exercises, to manage symptoms and improve patient outcomes.
- Educate patients on the appropriate use of antibiotics, what to do to feel better, and the risks associated with unnecessary antibiotic prescriptions, which could result in resistance to the medication.
- Assess patients for underlying conditions that may impact treatment, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or heart failure.

Additional guidelines and resources for flu vaccination and antibiotic use are available from the [American Academy of Family Physicians](#), [American College of Physicians](#), and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). The CDC offers [free continuing education \(CE\)](#) for health care professionals regarding judicious antibiotic prescribing and antibiotic resistance. Be sure to take advantage of this opportunity.

Members may call the FEP Nurse Line at 1-888-258-3432, available 24 hours, seven days a week with any health questions. If your patients have questions about their plan benefits or claims, they can call Customer Service at 1-800-333-2227 or visit [FEPblue.org](https://www.fepblue.org).