



Health Benefits Focus

CONTACTS

Anthem
1-800-552-2682
www.anthem.com/cova

Delta Dental
1-888-335-8296
www.deltadentalva.com

Medco
1-800-355-8279
www.medco.com

ValueOptions
1-866-725-0602
www.achievesolutions.net/covacare

Optima Health
1-866-846-2682
www.optimahealth.com/cova

Kaiser Permanente
1-800-777-7902
www.kp.org/mida/commonwealthofvirginia

DHRM
Office of Health Benefits
1-888-642-4414
www.dhrm.virginia.gov

Questions?

Send an e-mail to ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov or contact your agency Benefits Administrator

Protect Yourself Against Flu and Pneumonia

Whether it's a runny or stuffy nose, or something more serious, being sick is certainly no fun. During flu and pneumonia season, you can easily prevent getting ill and being absent from work.

Your state health plan offers flu and pneumonia vaccinations at no cost to you or your covered family members. Plus, it's convenient. You can get these shots at your doctor's office, a local participating pharmacy, and sometimes even where you work.

Visit Your Doctor

Contact your primary care doctor's office to find out when flu or pneumonia shots are available. Both vaccines are covered as part of preventive care, and there should be no charge to you for administering the shots.

If you do have a question or a problem, call your plan's member services department right away to speak with a representative. Member services contact information for each plan is listed at the left.

Pneumonia Shots

The Virginia Department of Health recommends a



Governor Bob McDonnell gets his annual flu shot on October 6 at the free flu shot clinic put on by the CommonHealth employee wellness program at the James Monroe Building in Richmond. (L to R): Governor McDonnell; Tim Colyer, Rph, Pharmacy Manager at the Walgreens store on Ridgefield Parkway in Richmond. (Photo Courtesy of Michael White, Governor's Photographer)

pneumonia shot (pneumococcal vaccine) for anyone 65 years of age and older who has not been vaccinated or who has no evidence of prior infection. A pneumonia shot is also recommended for adults with some other health problem, occupational or lifestyle risk factor.

Always consult your physician to find out if you should take the pneumonia vaccine or any immunization. Your doctor's

office can also provide a pneumonia immunization schedule for children and adults. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the adult pneumonia vaccine should be taken every five years. The shot may be administered by a nurse or lab technician. Contact your doctor if you have questions about the process.

Influenza Vaccine

Everyone should get a seasonal flu shot, starting

(continued on page 2)

Flu and Pneumonia Vaccines (continued)

with infants six months of age. During flu season, the doctor's office can tell you when supplies of the influenza vaccine are expected. Availability may vary with the year, depending on the flu strain involved. For example, you may remember the delays during 2009 in getting supplies of the H1N1 vaccine.

This year's vaccine covers both seasonal and H1N1 strains and is widely available, so do not delay making an appointment with your doctor.

Go to a Pharmacy

Visiting a local participating pharmacy is yet another way that state employees, early retirees, and family members may get a free flu shot. The only exception is the Kaiser Permanente HMO, which administers flu shots only in doctor's offices and at Kaiser medical centers.

Here's how to get a free flu shot at a pharmacy:

- Go to the DHRM Web site at www.dhrm.virginia.gov/hbenefits/cova/flushots.html to see if the pharmacy participates in the Commonwealth's flu shot program. Check often for the current list and read the Frequently Asked Questions.
- If your local drug store is on the list, call to confirm its participation in the program and be sure that flu shots are available.
- Go to the pharmacy to get your flu shot, present your health plan ID card, and be sure that the shot is given to you by a pharmacist.
- Your flu shot should go through the store's system at no charge to you or your family members who are covered by a state health plan.

- If you encounter problems, contact member services at the prescription benefit administrator or your agency Benefits Administrator.

Getting a Flu Shot At Work

Many state agency CommonHealth Coordinators work with local pharmacists to set up on-site flu shot clinics. The CommonHealth flu shot clinics usually take place for one or two days. The agency coordinator will provide a daily schedule of when shots are available. Be sure to bring your health plan ID card with you, fill out the appropriate permission form, and wear loose fitting sleeves to make it easier for the pharmacist to administer the vaccine.

If you have health coverage outside the state health plan, you may receive a flu shot at your own expense. Ask your agency coordinator for the amount you need to pay.

Prevent Flu at Work

Flu is contagious and easily spread to others. Follow these precautions to prevent flu in the workplace:

- Wash your hands often;
- Sneeze into your elbow, not your hand; and
- Take a hint from our canine friend. Stay home if you are sick.



For more information on pneumonia, flu and immunizations, visit the Virginia Department of Health's Web site at www.vdh.virginia.gov.

Thanks to many of you for sending comments and ideas for newsletter topics! Other thoughts? Send them to us at ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov.

In the Next Issue:

Medical flexible reimbursement accounts and national health care reform. What expenses may now be reimbursed?



Virginia Department of Human Resource Management
Office of Health Benefits