

CILT's Peer Links

Volume 8 Issue 1
October 2006

Delayed availability of Influenza Vaccine for the 2006-07 Season

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Flu vaccine manufacturers have reported problems growing one of the strains recommended for this season's flu shot. As a result, the vaccine should be available to the provinces and territories at the end of October or beginning of November.

This is about a month later than usual in some jurisdictions and means that the timeframe for the delivery of public programs will be compressed. People, however, should be able to receive the vaccine before the peak of the flu season, which typically does not occur until mid-December or later.

The production of influenza vaccine is a unique and complex process. The vaccine must be produced annually to ensure it provides the best possible protection against the latest types of flu virus in circulation since new viruses emerge each year.

The makeup of the vaccine is based on annual recommendations from the World Health Organization which are usually received in mid-February. Production starts soon after and usually takes about six months. Vaccine manufacturing is a biological process where manufacturers are dealing with a live, unpredictable virus. This means that there is always some potential for variation in the process. Time lines for the manufacturing and testing of the vaccine are also tight so challenges in the production process may result in unexpected delays.

Based on the World Health Organization guidelines, Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization recommended this year's influenza vaccine contain an A/New Caledonia-like, an A/Wisconsin-like and a B/Malaysia-like virus strains. There was a delay in getting the appropriate seed strain for the A/Wisconsin strain. The strain also had a low yield so it took longer to produce. The WHO also issues test kits that are used to determine the content and strength of the vaccine. Given the problems with the A/Wisconsin strain, the distribution of the test kits were also delayed. All of these factors have led to the end of October delivery date.

The ideal time to be vaccinated is anywhere from October to November. Obviously, federal, provincial and territorial health authorities would prefer to see

public programs launched as early as possible but this is a situation that all manufacturers are facing. The Public Health Agency is working closely with the provinces and territories to develop a plan to manage the supply of the vaccine and make sure it is available when and where it is needed.

Flu Myths

There are many reasons why some people are unlikely to get the flu vaccination. Some people are allergic to eggs and really shouldn't get a flu shot. Others admit they're afraid of needles and don't like getting shots of any kind. Still others claim that they had intended to get a flu shot but couldn't find the time to do so.

Outside of an allergy to eggs, there is no good reason to avoid getting a flu shot – especially when it can help you avoid a serious and potentially life-threatening illness. Complications from the flu can be very serious and the flu shot dramatically reduces the risk of contracting this disease. Through the Universal Influenza Immunization Program, Ontario's health ministry makes flu shots available to all Ontarians free of charge.

Let's dispel some common myths about getting a flu shot:

Myth #1:

I didn't get a flu shot last year and I didn't get sick. Obviously I don't need the flu vaccination.

Fact:

Every flu season brings a new and different strain of the disease. While some flu seasons turn out to be "lighter" than others, no one can predict when a really bad flu season will occur.

Myth #2:

I'm young and healthy. I don't need a flu shot.

Fact:

Influenza is much worse than a cold. Even healthy young adults can become seriously ill. On average, people who become sick from the flu are bed-ridden for up to five days, causing them to lose time from work or vacation.

Besides, if you develop the flu, there's a chance you might infect others who are at much higher risk than you: young children, elderly people, or someone with a medical condition who could end up with serious complications from the flu and end up in the hospital.

Myth #3:

Getting a flu shot will give me the flu.

Fact:

This is simply not true. The vaccine does not contain any live virus so you cannot get the flu from the vaccine. Many people confuse the flu with a cold or other respiratory infections. The vaccine will not protect you against these.

Myth #4:

The flu is just a bad cold.

Fact:

A cold is not the flu. The flu is much worse. The flu is caused by the influenza virus. A cold is caused by several different viruses.

Myth #5:

Flu shots aren't worth getting because they're not very effective anyway.

Fact:

A flu shot is about 70% to 90% effective in preventing illness in healthy adults. In children, it's about 62% to 73% effective in preventing illness with fever. Among the elderly, the vaccine can prevent pneumonia and hospitalization in about six out of ten people. Protection from the vaccine develops about one to two weeks after the shot, and may last for up to one year. Vaccine effectiveness varies from one person to another, depending on their general state of health. Some individuals who get a flu shot can still get the flu. But if they do, it is usually a milder case than it would have been without the flu shot.

Myth #6:

I don't need another shot. I've already been vaccinated.

Fact:

A flu shot is needed every year. There are many different strains of the flu virus with slightly different characteristics. The strains change yearly and each year a new vaccine is produced that provides protection against the three most common strains predicted for the coming season. Protect yourself and the people around you by getting a free flu shot. And this year, it's never been easier. See your doctor or pharmacist, or call to find a clinic near you.

How to wash your hands properly

Washing your hands properly is a good way to prevent many contagious diseases. To wash your hands properly:

- Take off any jewellery
- Wet your hands with warm water
- Apply soap
- Scrub with soap all over your hands and under your nails for 20 seconds (as long as it takes to sing "Happy Birthday")
- Rinse for 10 seconds under warm water
- Dry hands completely with a paper towel
- Turn off the tap with a paper towel (don't use your bare hand, or your hand could get germs on it)

When to wash your hands

You should wash your hands:

- Before and after you eat or prepare food
- After you use the bathroom or change diapers
- After you blow your nose, sneeze or cough into your sleeve
- Before and after taking care of someone who is sick

More information about proper hand washing:

Hand washing instructions and resources for the general public, teachers, and daycare providers from Do Bugs Need Drugs, a non-profit organization that promotes hygiene and teaches about antibiotic resistance.

Book This Date on Your Calendar!

Friday November 24, 2006

The next Regional Conference, hosted by the Ontario Self-Help Network (OSHNET), will be held in Toronto on Friday November 24, 2006 in Room 200 at 40 Orchard View Blvd.

This year's theme is ***Building Connections***, and while all the details have not been finalized, the six workshops offered will be of interest to both professionals and self-helpers. For more details, check out www.selfhelp.on.ca in early October, when registration forms will be available online.

OSHNET is a program of the Self-Help Resource Centre of Toronto and is funded by the Ministry of Health Promotion. OSHNET offers consultations, networking, resources and training to individuals, groups, organizations and communities interested in applying the principles of self-help/mutual aid/and peer support. For more information, contact the OSHNET coordinators at (416) 487-4355.

Baking Made Easy

The Adult Interactive is hosting a “baking and tasting extravaganza” on **Monday October 23rd 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at the Ontario March of Dimes - 10 Overlea Blvd. (Don Mills & Laird Drive). Learn to prepare diabetes friendly and quick time preparations. The fee to attend this event is \$2.00 which includes lunch and drinks.

To RSVP call Constantine at (416) 690-8804 by Wednesday October 18th, 2006. Attendant Care will be available.

The Adult Interactive (A.I.) committee offers bi-monthly social events for adults with disabilities to increase opportunities to meet people, learn new skills, have fun and get caught up with what’s happening in the community. The Adult Interactive events are for those who can direct their own care. A.I. believes each individual is responsible for themselves while at A.I. events.

The Adult Interactive committee is supported by the following organizations: Anne Johnston Health Station, Tobias House Resource Centre, Ontario March of Dimes, Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre and Scadding Court Community Centre.

Interested in Volunteering?

CILT is holding an “interactive” Volunteer Orientation Workshop on Tuesday November 7th from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. CILT is currently recruiting volunteers to assist staff with the following tasks:

- Mailings
- Photocopying
- Assembling information packages and
- Filing.

At this workshop, you will also:

- Learn more about CILT and our volunteer program;
- Understand concepts and benefits of volunteering;
- Discover how volunteering can help you find a job; and
- Find out how you can be a CILT volunteer.

If you would be interested in volunteering at CILT, please come to our workshop,

located at 205 Richmond Street West, Suite 605. If you are planning to attend, please RSVP to Nancy at (416) 599-2458, extension 27 or by TTY at (416) 599-5077. Attendant services and refreshments will be provided. Other accommodations may be provided upon request.

Breast Health Awareness for Women with Disabilities

CILT will be hosting another workshop on Breast Health Awareness for Women with Disabilities on *Saturday November 18th, 1pm to 4pm* at 205 Richmond Street West (Richmond & Duncan), suite 605. Attendant services, childcare and refreshments will be provided.

Breast Health starts with you knowing your own breasts, just like you know your face or hands. Most breast problems can be treated if they are discovered early enough. This workshop will dispel some of the common myths about breast cancer, and provide you with the information you need to take control of your health!

If you would like to attend this workshop, please call (416) 599-2458 and speak to either Kimberly (x34) or Nancy (x27) by **Friday November 10, 2006.**

Driving Over Barriers - Minister and March of Dimes Help Co-op Cabs' Launch of Toronto's First Wheelchair Accessible On-Demand Taxicab Service

(TORONTO – OCTOBER 3, 2006) – Living in Toronto, a city where taxicabs rule the streets, finding public transportation to accommodate wheelchairs isn't an easy task. Restricted to WheelTrans' set schedules and day-before reservations, wheelchair bound citizens are getting frustrated with the lack of flexible and accessible taxicab transportation. Until now.

On Thursday, October 5th, at 9:00am at their head office located at 560 King Street W., Co-op Cabs hosted a ceremony to launch its Driving Accessibility Campaign, Toronto's first On-Demand Wheelchair Accessible Taxicab Service. "Wheelchair users will now be able to flag an accessible taxi-van at the same rate whenever needed and have the freedom to come and go as they please," said Peter Zahakos, CEO and General Manager of Co-op Cabs. "This is the first time a cab company will provide true accessibility and equality to individuals with disabilities."

Committed to 'driving over barriers' that prevent wheelchair-bound people from the same opportunities as others, Co-op Cabs will provide this on-demand

service at the regular taxi meter rates. Whereas other wheelchair accessible vehicles are more expensive and run on restricted timetables, the new multipurpose on-demand taxi-vans will carry both able-bodied as well as wheelchair bound customers on a more flexible schedule. Co-op Cabs is looking to expand this on-demand taxi-van service to the greater community as well.

Helping launch this unique initiative was the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, MPP, Minister of Community and Social Services, Responsible for Ontarians with Disabilities, and Warren Rupnarain of Warren's World, an advocacy group of Ontario March of Dimes.

"Our goal is to make Ontario an accessible province by 2025. We need the kind of leadership demonstrated by companies like Co-Op Cabs," said Minister Meilleur.

"Forward thinking is needed to open doors for those with differing abilities. Accessible cabs contribute to accessible cities where everyone is better able to participate in the community."

"Co-op Cabs is taking a great step towards equality that others haven't and this is important," said Rupnarain. "Implementing a policy such as this demonstrates their conscious effort to provide equal opportunities for the disabled community. This new service shows Co-op Cabs' real leadership as advocates of change, paving the way to provide all citizens of Toronto the freedom to travel and we encourage all cab companies to follow their example."

Following the ceremony, Minister Meilleur and Rupnarain participated in an inaugural drive in the new taxi-vans. The Ford Freestar Vans converted by Liberty Motors will form the core of Co-op's multipurpose taxicabs. Media are invited to attend the ceremony and procession.

Celebrating its 50th year as one of Toronto's most successful cab companies, Co-op Cabs has over 700 drivers with more than 400 cars on call.

For more information contact Brown & Cohen Communications & Public Affairs Inc., Charlene Lunau at 416-484-1132 ext. 4 or charlene@brown-cohen.com OR Wendy Kauffman 416 484-1132 ext 3 or wendy@brown-cohen.com.

Wen-Do: Self-Defense for Women Living with Mobility Disabilities

Free, 4-week workshop being held Tuesdays, November 7, 14, 21 & 28 from 6:30 pm to 9:00pm facilitated by Denise Handlarski and Deb Chard.

To register please email us your name, phone number and any accessibility requirements you have. This workshop is limited to 10 participants. Two attendants will be available on-site for all dates.

For more information on the WEN-DO self defense program for women living with mobility disabilities, please use the following contact information:

Centre for Women and Trans People
at York University
416-736-2100 x 33484
<http://yorku.ca/ywc>

Stock Trading Firm Launches Program for People with Disabilities

BC Paraplegic Association and Pacific Assistance Dogs to Accept Donation and Kick-off 'First Trade'

(VANCOUVER – October 5, 2006) – Swift Trade Inc., one of Canada's leading stock trading firms, proudly announces the launch of a new program geared at providing jobs for individuals with physical disabilities.

In addition to donations of \$50,000 to the BC Paraplegic Association, and \$30,000 to Pacific Assistance Dogs, Swift Trade Inc. is looking to recruit people with spinal cord injuries and other physical disabilities to be stock traders in its British Columbia offices.

To officially kick-off the program, Kirsten Sharp, Board Member of the BCPA, and Bob Morrison, Executive Director of Pacific Assistance Dogs, will accept the donations, while **a specially-trained Chesapeake Bay Retriever - PADS service dog "Rex" will make the ceremonial first trade at Swift Trade's Vancouver office on October 16th at 12:00 noon at # 409 Alexander Centre, 611 Alexander St. Vancouver.**

"Trading provides a unique and fast-paced career opportunity for people with spinal cord and other physical injuries," said Swift Trade Inc. President and founder Peter Beck. "When we think of the employment opportunities available to people with physical limitations, stock trading isn't currently what comes to mind. We hope to raise awareness among this very viable population that this is a challenging and potentially lucrative profession."

Beginning next week, Swift Trade's offices across British Columbia, including the Vancouver, Langley, Kelowna and, later this fall, the Nanaimo office, will be actively welcoming resumes from people with physical disabilities to be stock traders. The only office not participating in this initiative is their Victoria office due

to unalterable building restrictions. Swift Trade Inc. has already begun working in conjunction with organizations such as Link UP and the Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA) of Ontario, to identify and train individuals with spinal cord injuries to trade at their headquarters in Toronto. If successful in Ontario and B.C., the company plans to replicate the initiative at their offices across the country over the next year.

“Swift Trade Inc.’s donation to our organization is a wonderful way to kick off this initiative which will help create employment opportunities for a very important segment of the population who often face many challenges in finding work,” said Melanie Crombie, Executive Director of the BCPA.

“Pacific Assistance Dogs is thrilled to receive Swift Trade’s generous donation,” said Executive Director Bob Morrison. “This donation can go a long way in training and placing specially trained assistance dogs with people living the daily challenges of life with a physical disability. PADS is proud to be a part of this fabulous program. Together with a dog at their side, and new employment opportunities, people with disabilities can lead more independent lives.”

To accommodate this program, Swift Trade has begun implementing several pieces of new adaptive technology including keyboards which can be programmed for commands such as buying and selling stock. Swift Trade hires individuals who trade the firm’s account. Each person must be rigorously trained and follow strict guidelines on what and how they trade.

PHOTO/ INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY: The ceremonial ‘dog trade’ will take place on October 16th at 12:00 PM at Swift Trade Inc.’s Vancouver office. Bob Morrison of PADS and Kirsten Sharp of the BCPA will be present to accept the donation from Peter Beck, President of Swift Trade. The office is located at #409 Alexander Centre, 611 Alexander St. Vancouver. Media are invited to attend.

Swift Trade began in 1998 as Canada’s first direct access trading firm. Today it is the country’s leading proprietary trading firm with over 86 offices in 22 countries around the world. The company was named # 7 on Profit magazine’s hottest startups in 2001 and # 2 on the 100 fastest growing companies list in Canada in 2004.

For more information contact Brown & Cohen Communications & Public Affairs Inc. Natasha Bolotina at 416-484-1132 extension 5 or natasha@brown-cohen.com or Kim Cohen at 416-484-1132 extension 2 or kim@brown-cohen.com.

Baked Apples with Cranberries and Pecans

Serves 4

Ingredients

2 tbsp (25 mL) brown sugar
1 tsp (5 mL) cinnamon
2 tbsp (25 mL) dried cranberries
2 tbsp (25 mL) coarsely chopped pecans, toasted
1 tbsp (15 mL) soft non-hydrogenated margarine, melted
4 baking apples like Golden Delicious
1/2 cup (125 mL) apple juice

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F/ 180°C. Slice off about 1/4-inch/ 0.5 cm of the top of each apple. Core the apples to remove seeds, leaving the bottom of the fruit intact. Place apples in an 8 X 8 inch (20-cm) baking dish or shallow oval pan.

In a small mixing bowl, combine the sugar, cinnamon, cranberries and nuts. Stir in melted margarine. Place the mixture in centre and on top of each apple. Carefully pour juice over apples, not to disturb topping. Bake until the apples are tender, about 45 minutes. Baste the apples with the juice mixture with a bulb baster 2 or 3 times during baking. Serve warm or at room temperature with low-fat frozen vanilla yogurt.

Nutritional information per serving

Calories: 172
Protein: 1 g
Fat: 5 g
Saturated fat: 1 g
Carbohydrate: 33 g
Dietary fibre: 6 g
Dietary cholesterol: 0 mg
Sodium: 29 mg
Potassium: 240 mg

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