



CDC, AMA, and Ad Council Urge Flu Vaccinations to Reduce Flu Hospitalizations Amid COVID-19 Concerns

Nearly a third of Black and Hispanic adults in the U.S. are undecided about flu vaccination this season due to perceived lack of susceptibility and questions around how the flu shot interacts with COVID-19 vaccines



NEW YORK, Oct. 12, 2021 — The Ad Council, the American Medical Association (AMA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the CDC Foundation today announced a new effort to encourage more people to get vaccinated against seasonal flu. While flu activity was unusually low during the 2020-2021 flu season—due largely to COVID-19 mitigation measures like wearing masks, school and work closures, and physical distancing—the threat of flu is likely far greater this year with many of those mitigation measures in decline. During a severe season, flu has resulted in as many as 41 million illnesses and 710,000 hospitalizations among Americans. The new effort extends the *No Time for Flu* campaign and introduces #FluFOMO to inspire more people to get a flu vaccine to protect themselves, their families, and their communities.

AMA President Gerald E. Harmon, M.D. said:

“With COVID-19 cases still alarmingly high amid the spread of the delta variant, getting the flu vaccine will help protect people from illness, hospitalization, and death. The flu vaccine is safe, effective, and can be taken in tandem with the COVID-19 vaccine. The AMA is committed to achieving optimal health for all, and we are pleased that this campaign is focused on the Black and LatinX communities.”

CDC Director of the Office of Minority Health and Health Equity Leandris Liburd, PhD, MPH, MA said:

“There are many unknowns going into this fall and winter with the possibility that flu and COVID-19 will spread at the same time. What we do know is that flu and COVID-19 vaccines can prevent many illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths. CDC is focusing extra efforts on encouraging vaccination among people in racial and ethnic minority groups, who have historically had lower flu vaccination rates. Communities of color are unequally impacted by severe flu illness and have also been hit the hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The *No Time for Flu* campaign will run nationwide throughout the 2021-2022 flu season, with a particular emphasis on reaching Black and Hispanic communities. The campaign will be paired with #FluFOMO to urge Americans to get a flu shot to avoid missing out on fun moments like spending time with family and



friends. An August 2021 survey by the Ad Council revealed that 30% of Black respondents and 33% of Hispanic respondents were undecided about getting a flu vaccine this season. Black and Hispanic people remain a key focus of the campaign due to longstanding healthcare inequities that have created undue burden and barriers in their communities. These groups remain at a higher risk of getting very sick from the flu, and less likely to get flu vaccinations.

Ad Council President and CEO Lisa Sherman said:

"We're honored to continue our partnership with AMA and CDC to build off the impact of last year's flu vaccination campaign. The difficult, but necessary work continues of engaging with Black and Hispanic Americans about the flu and challenging the mindsets of individuals who are undecided about getting the vaccine. Our campaign raises awareness that the flu shot is the most effective way to protect ourselves and our families and can significantly reduce the burden on our hospitals and healthcare workers."

The *No Time for Flu* and #FluFOMO ads were created pro bono by advertising agency fluent360 and will appear in print, TV, radio, social media, out-of-home, and digital formats nationwide in time and space donated by the media. Inspired by the insight that people are motivated by caring for their loved ones, and that many are juggling more responsibilities than ever this year, the campaign illustrates how getting sick with flu doesn't just mean feeling ill—it could significantly disrupt the lives of individuals and their families.

fluent360 Creative Director, Tracey Coleman said:

"I'm proud that our agency can continue supporting multicultural communities through this impactful campaign and important work. Our hope is that this inspires us all to take full advantage of the unique opportunity we now have to be present for each other this flu season."

CDC recommends that everyone six months and older (with rare exceptions) get a flu vaccine each year—by the end of October, ideally. Flu vaccines and COVID-19 vaccines can be given at the same time. Each year, CDC and AMA undertake a range of efforts to increase the number of people who receive a flu vaccine. This season those efforts include working with doctor's offices and pharmacies to provide guidance on giving flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time and supporting community-based efforts to increase vaccination among racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States.

The campaign ads direct audiences to [GetMyFluShot.org](https://www.getmyflushot.org) for more information, including where to get a flu vaccine in their area.

About the AMA

The American Medical Association is the physicians' powerful ally in patient care. As the only medical association that convenes 190+ state and specialty medical societies and other critical stakeholders, the AMA represents physicians with a unified voice to all key players in health care. The AMA leverages its strength by removing the obstacles that interfere with patient care, leading the charge to prevent chronic disease and confront public health crises and, driving the future of medicine to tackle the biggest challenges in health care.

About CDC

CDC works 24/7 protecting America's health, safety and security. Whether disease start at home or abroad, are curable or preventable, chronic or acute, or from human activity or deliberate attack, CDC responds to America's most pressing health threats. CDC is headquartered in Atlanta and has experts located throughout the United States and the world.

About the Ad Council

The Ad Council has a long history of creating life-saving public service communications in times of national crisis, starting in the organization's earliest days during World War II to September 11th and natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Sandy. Its deep relationships with media outlets,



the creative community, issue experts and government leaders make the organization uniquely poised to quickly distribute life-saving information to millions of Americans.

The Ad Council is where creativity and causes converge. The non-profit organization brings together the most creative minds in advertising, media, technology and marketing to address many of the nation's most important causes. The Ad Council has created many of the most iconic campaigns in advertising history. Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk. Smokey Bear. Love Has No Labels.

The Ad Council's innovative social good campaigns raise awareness, inspire action and save lives. To learn more, visit AdCouncil.org, follow the Ad Council's communities on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and view the creative on [YouTube](#).

About fluent360

fluent360 unfolds the power of cultural influence for leading brands. We deliver outstanding creative solutions with a truly diverse team of specialists, wide cultural competency, and a work portfolio representing the major segments in the multicultural marketplace. Equal parts integrated marketing and cultural hub, we are the foremost experts in culture, and connecting brands to it. A multi-talented, multicultural agency, we offer a full spectrum of communication services from our Chicago, Nashville and NYC offices. Learn more at fluent360.com.

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