

# **Influenza Vaccination Coverage Rates in Austria during the winter of 2006/2007**

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**Objectives:** The objectives of the survey were to identify the level of influenza vaccination coverage in Austria in 2006/2007, to understand the drivers and barriers to vaccination, to find out vaccination intentions for the next winter and major encouraging factors to vaccination.

**Methodology:** A telephone omnibus survey (using CATI system) was conducted among 2000 non-institutionalised individuals representative of the population aged 15 years old and over. The research was carried out in January and February 2007.

**Results:** In 2006/2007, influenza vaccination coverage rate (VCR) in the population was 18% and 3% got vaccinated for the first time. The elderly population (defined as 65 years old and over) accounted for 37% coverage, which is the highest level of vaccinations among the Austrian population. Furthermore, 63% of the previously vaccinated population got vaccinated this year again.

In 2006/2007, 65% of the population had never been vaccinated.

The principal motivations for getting vaccinated were considering flu as a serious illness (35%), avoiding transmission to family and friends (23%) and receiving advice from family doctor/nurse (23%). The most important reasons for non-vaccination among the population never previously vaccinated were feeling unlikely to catch the flu (46%), thinking about vaccination without getting it (13%) and not having considered vaccination before (10%). The barriers to vaccination among people previously vaccinated but not this winter were not having thought about vaccination/ forgot (32%), having caught the flu before despite the vaccination (16%) and not feeling concerned (13%).

26% of the survey population intended to get a flu jab next winter season 2007/ 2008. The elderly people represented the highest level of vaccination intention (41%).

For 46% of the population, the strongest option encouraging influenza vaccination is a recommendation from a healthcare professional.

**Conclusion:** During winter 2006/ 2007, VCR was 18% in the population over 15 years of age and 37% for the elderly-aged population. Our findings underline the absence of interest in the vaccination and suggest that the family doctor is the most essential factor to encourage people to get vaccinated against influenza.