

Influenza Vaccination Coverage Rates in France 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 France 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: Data were based on the yearly survey by GEIG (Groupe d'Étude et d'Information sur la Grippe) carried out by mail. The questionnaire was completed by 3991 individuals, representative of the population aged 15 years old and over. The research was carried out in February 2007.

Results: In 2006/2007, influenza vaccination coverage rate (VCR) in the French population stayed stable at 24%. 2% were vaccinated for the first time. The highest coverage (68%) was achieved in the elderly age-recommended population, which is defined as the people aged 65 and over. Furthermore, 65% of the surveyed population and 23% of the over 65s had never got an influenza vaccination.

47% of the vaccinees considered the reimbursement by the Social Security as the principal driving force for getting vaccinated, followed by the age (37%) and the perception of the seriousness of flu as a disease (34%) or the advice from the family doctor (34%). Feeling too young to be vaccinated (35%), not having considered vaccination before (21%) and the absence of the family doctors' recommendations (17%) were the main causes for non-vaccination among the population never previously vaccinated. For those individuals, who were vaccinated during the last season, the most frequently stated reasons for dropping out this year were not feeling like being inoculated every year (28%), not having thought about vaccination/ forgot (16%) and having caught the flu despite vaccination (15%).

In 2006/2007, the intentions for being inoculated against influenza next winter season decreased by one point in comparison with 2005/2006 (from 29% to 28%).

The advice from the family doctor would be the major encouragement to vaccination, stated by 37% of the survey population.

Conclusion: During winter 2006/2007, VCR reached a level of 24% in the population over 15 years of age, but 68% in the elderly-aged population. Our findings suggest that an active recommendation of the vaccine by healthcare workers could significantly change the level of influenza vaccination coverage in France.