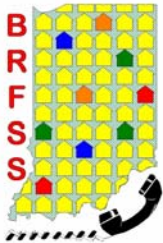


Indiana BRFSS Newsletter



*Indiana State Department of Health
Epidemiology Resource Center
Data Analysis*

Influenza Vaccine Coverage from the BRFSS Indiana and United States, September 2004 - January 2005 Data

Linda Stemnock and Shawn Richards



In October 2004, a major supplier of influenza (flu) vaccine informed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that its license had been suspended for three months. This immediately reduced the nation's expected supply of the vaccine (flu shot) by 50 percent for the current flu season.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommended that the vaccine be provided to the following priority groups first: adults ages 65 years and older, adults with chronic conditions such as asthma, health care workers with patient contact, women who are current pregnant, children ages 6-23 months, and children ages 2-17 years with a chronic condition. The CDC and state health departments have been working together to provide the vaccine to these priority groups.

In order to assess the use of influenza vaccine among priority and non-priority groups as well as the main reasons reported for not receiving the vaccine, 17 questions were added to the ongoing Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey beginning November 1, 2004. Data from these flu questions are being provided to all states each month along with national data for comparison. The questions ask about both adult and child receipt of the flu vaccine. The BRFSS is a monthly, state-based random digit-dial telephone survey of civilian, non-institutionalized adults ages 18 years and older. Results from the month of January 2005 are presented here, as they are the most recent.

Approximately 21 percent (21.1%) of Indiana respondents reported that they had received a flu shot this flu season, comparable to the national average of 21.8 percent. Use of the flu spray (Flu Mist) was rarely reported in Indiana or the United States (0.5% and 0.6%, respectively).

Respondents were significantly more likely to have received an influenza vaccination in the past flu season (September 2003-March 2004) than in the current flu season (September 2004-March 2005). Approximately 44 percent (43.7%) of Indiana respondents reported receiving an influenza vaccination in the past flu season, while only 21.1 percent reported receiving the vaccine in this flu season. National data were comparable.

For Indiana adults in any priority group, fewer reported receiving an influenza vaccination in the current flu season than in the past flu season (44.0% vs. 53.8%, respectively); however, the difference was not statistically significant. At the national level, significantly fewer adults in any priority group reported receiving an influenza vaccination in the current flu season than in the past flu season (33.6% vs. 49.3%, respectively). Compared to the national average, significantly more Indiana adults in any priority group have received an influenza vaccination (see Figure 1.)

Respondents who reported receiving a flu vaccination in the current season were asked which month they received the vaccination. Compared to the nation, significantly more Indiana respondents reported receiving the vaccination in October 2004; however, significantly fewer Indiana respondents reported receiving the vaccination in December 2004 and January 2005 (see Figure 2.)

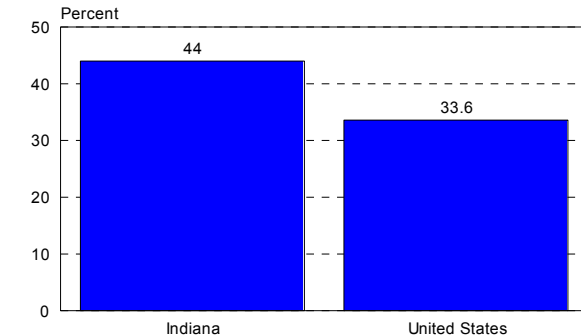
Adults who reported receiving a flu vaccination in the current season were asked where they received the vaccination. Approximately two-thirds of Indiana respondents reported that they received the vaccination in a doctor's office/health maintenance organization or in a health department/clinic. (See Figure 3.) National results were comparable.

Indiana respondents who reported they did not receive the flu vaccine in the current season were asked why. Approximately 43 percent (43.1%) responded that they thought they did not need it, and 34.8 percent cited the vaccine shortage (saving vaccine for the people who need it more/tried to find vaccine but could not get it/not eligible to receive vaccine).

Figure 1

Adults in Any Priority Group Who Received Vaccine in the Current Flu Season*

Indiana vs. United States, January 2005

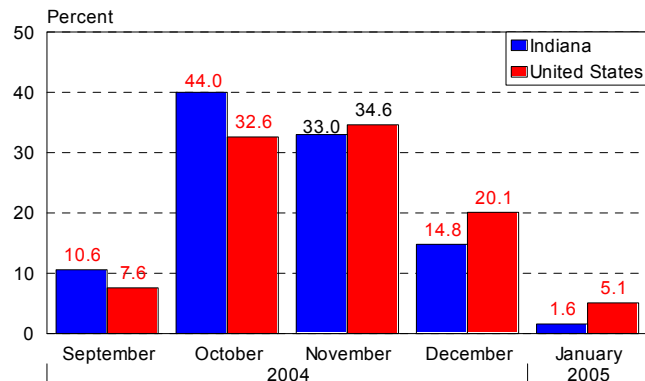


*September 2004-March 2005
Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

Figure 2

Month Received Vaccine in Current Flu Season

Indiana vs. United States
September 2004 - January 2005

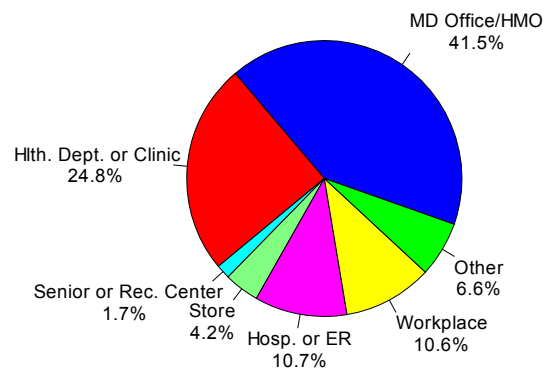


*Red = Significant difference
Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

Figure 3

Where Respondents Received Vaccination

Indiana, January 2005



Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

Approximately six percent (5.9%) reported that there was a concern about the vaccine (side effects/can cause flu/does not work), and 4.5 percent reported access as the reason (plan to get vaccinated later in season/cost/inconvenience). Approximately 12 percent (11.8%) reported other reasons. National data were comparable.

Nationally, 19.3 percent of children have received an influenza vaccination in the current flu season, compared to 27.5 percent in the past flu season (significant difference). Children ages 6-23 months were significantly more likely than other age groups to have received a vaccination in the current flu season (53.7%). Children ages 12-17 were significantly less likely than children under 12 years of age to have received an influenza vaccination in the current flu season. Overall, 26.4 percent of children in any priority group have received a vaccination in the current season. (See Figure 4.)

Indiana adult respondents reported that 16.3 percent of children had received a vaccination in the current flu season compared to 22.5 percent in the past season; however, the difference was not significant. For the children who did not receive a flu vaccination in the current season, the main reason that the adult respondents reported was they did not think it was needed (56.3%). The vaccine shortage (saving vaccine for people who need it/tried to find vaccine but could not get it/not eligible to receive vaccine) was the reason for 29.8 percent of respondents. (See Figure 5.)

Figure 4

Children that Received Vaccination in Current Flu Season by Age
United States, January 2005

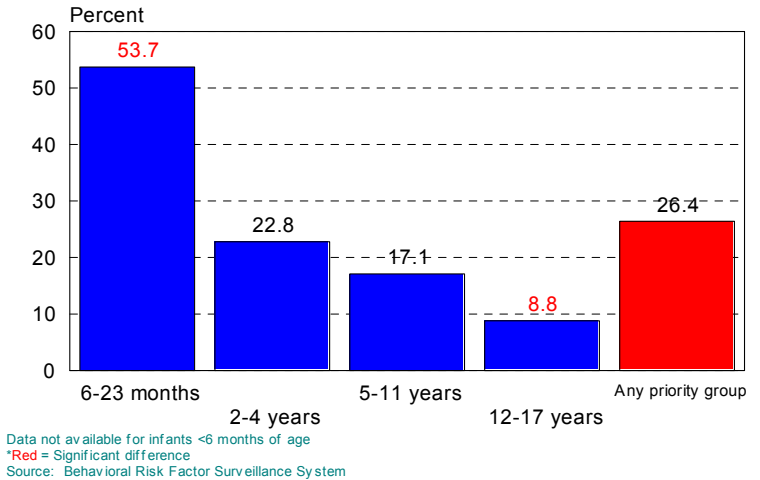
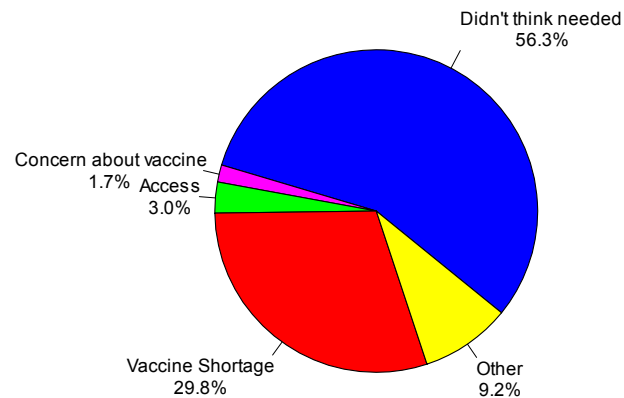


Figure 5

Main Reason Children Did Not Receive Vaccination this Season
Indiana, January 2005



Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

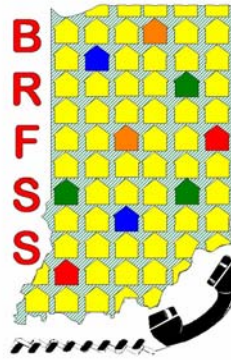
The current flu season will soon end. Restrictions on the vaccine have been lifted. Concerns remain that not enough residents in priority groups, as well as the rest of the population, had received the vaccine during the current flu season. Only 9.7 percent of Indiana respondents ages 18-49 years reported receiving the vaccine this season, and only 18.7 percent of adults ages 50-64 years reported receiving the vaccine. For adults ages 65 years and older, one third have not been vaccinated, and over 50 percent of adults in priority groups have not been vaccinated. It is recommended that residents continue to receive the influenza vaccination as long as the influenza virus is circulating in our communities.



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