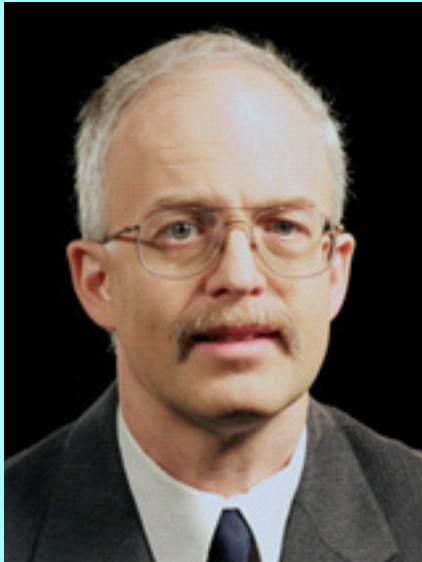


RESEARCH PARTICIPANT REGISTRY

RESEARCH IN THE SPOTLIGHT: FLU

Winter 2014-15



Richard K. Zimmerman, MD, MPH, is a professor of family medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He's also an professor of behavioral and community health sciences at Pitt's Graduate School of Public Health and a practicing family physician. Dr. Zimmerman is well-known for his research on vaccinations and health care inequalities.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), defines influenza (flu) a "contagious respiratory illness caused by different flu viruses." It can cause mild to severe illness. Older people, younger people, and people with certain health conditions (like asthma or serious heart conditions) are at a higher risk for serious flu complications. Flu can lead to hospitalization and even death in some cases.

What are the symptoms of flu?

The classic symptoms of flu in adults can be fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue, and body aches. Not everyone who gets the flu will have a fever or sore throat, though.

When are people most likely to get flu? How is it spread?

We see flu in our part of the world mostly in the winter, although there are random cases in other parts of the year. Sometimes more than one strain of flu will hit the same place. Two waves of flu came through Pittsburgh last year. Flu can hit anyone. The rates of people dying from flu go up when people have other high-risk conditions (usually heart and lung diseases) and with age. Most experts think flu viruses are spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk.

There's no cure for the flu; how are symptoms treated?

If you feel terrible and see the doctor, you can be tested and get medicine that may shorten the time you have the flu and make the symptoms milder. Sometimes you can get medicine without being tested if the flu is going through the community and you're showing the same symptoms as other people who have tested positive. The five-day course of flu medicine has to be started within the first two days of showing flu symptoms. High-risk people, like people with chronic lung diseases, may get the medicine after the first two days. For a healthy adult, medicine is optional. But some people think it's worth it to take the medicine and not miss as many days of work. For people with chronic medical conditions, we'd want them to use it to reduce the risk of complications.

How do we best prevent flu from spreading?

We can reduce risk with hand washing, but the best protection is vaccination. The vaccine isn't perfect. For those who have an egg allergy, there is a vaccine available without egg. A doctor can help you figure out which vaccine is right for you. Flu vaccine is safe. Getting vaccinated by October of every year is the best way to stop flu.

I recommend that everyone aged 6 months and older get an appropriate flu vaccine every year. The CDC recommends that healthy children ages 2 through 8 get the live vaccine (nasal mist), if it's available. The live virus is weakened, and it's sprayed into the nose. It gives protection at the site where flu may strike. It can be given to healthy people ages 2 thru 49. People who can't have a live vaccine for some reason (such as asthma or heart disease) can have the inactivated vaccine (a shot). The inactivated vaccine is recommended for all ages. For people 65 and older, there is the high-dose inactivated vaccine that seems to work better in that age group.

What would you say to people concerned about the flu vaccine?

I'm vaccinated, and so are my wife and children. You want to be vaccinated for yourself and also to protect others who may be more at risk. If you're the parent of an infant, you want to get vaccinated so that you don't bring illness to your child, who has the potential to suffer from more serious complications because of age. The same thing is true if you take care of an aging loved one.

I'd also tell them to visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/> for more information.

REGISTRY ENROLLMENT REACHES A MILESTONE

Enrollment in the University of Pittsburgh/UPMC Research Participant Registry has recently reached 75,000 active participants. Thank you for being part of the Registry!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR STUDIES

University of Pittsburgh PRO12110062: Cancer Survivorship Self-Advocacy Study

Are you a female cancer survivor? If so, you're invited to complete a confidential questionnaire about how women with cancer stand up for themselves against the challenges of cancer. The questionnaire can either be completed online or sent through U.S. mail to you and will take about one hour to complete. Compensation provided.

University of Pittsburgh PRO09070279A: CBZ Study: Adults ages 18-80

If you have alpha-1-antitrypsin (AT) deficiency and liver disease, you may be eligible to be screened for a study to understand the effects of the drug carbamazepine (Tegretol) on liver scarring. Eligible participants receive the medication or a placebo for one year. There are a total of seven study visits in one year. Screening includes exams, blood work, a liver biopsy, and liver pressure monitoring.

University of Pittsburgh PRO12070370: Communal Health Interactions in Couples Study (CHOICES)

A Carnegie Mellon University/Pitt couples research study is looking for couples (married or living together for at least two years) with one partner diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in the past two years (spouse/partner does NOT have diabetes). Study involves interviews, conversations, and answering questions about diabetes. Study location is flexible. Participants will be compensated.

For more information about these studies, please contact the Research Participant Registry office at 1-866-438-8230.

INFLUENZA WORD SEARCH

ACHE

AIRBORNE

CONTAGIOUS

COUGH

FATIGUE

FEVER

SNEEZE

SORE THROAT

VIRUS

R A G W I S J M E L Y Q R E Z
E F I N S O U N F A T I G U E
R M E M J H R O S B Z O T X A
W Z D Y J O U Z I N E S R L S
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A H G R Y U M V B Y A E C O O
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SHARE YOUR STORY!

The Research Participant Registry Office is looking for people who want to share their experiences of participating in a study. Send an email to researchregistry@hs.pitt.edu with your story.