



Ipsos Public Affairs

Flu Vaccination Survey

Methodology

This summary memo contains findings from an Ipsos poll conducted January 11-15, 2013. The sample comprised 1,096 Americans ages 18+ who were interviewed online. The precision of the polls is measured using a credibility interval. The poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.4 percentage points.

The data were weighted to the U.S. current population data by gender, age, education, and ethnicity. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error.

Key Findings

- 40% of Americans stated that they got a flu shot this season, and additional 5% reported that they will probably get a flu shot
- 28% of Americans are certain that they will not get a flu shot this season and 17% stated that they will probably not get a flu shot
- Rate of vaccinations vary by age: Americans 18 to 24 years of age and those over 50 were more likely to get a flu shot than other groups. The rate of flu vaccination was lowest among 25 to 34 year olds (24.1%)

Table 1: Rate of vaccination by age groups

18 thru 24	25 thru 34	35 thru 44	45 thru 54	55 or more
45.8%	24.1%	34.5%	38.6%	50.1%

- Vaccination rates were highest in the New England region, but were much lower in East South Central Regions (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee) and West South Central Regions (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas)

New England	Mid-Atlantic	East North Central	West North Central	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	Mountain	Pacific
48.3%	40.9%	43.2%	41.6%	39.5%	33.0%	29.9%	41.4%	43.1%

- Most Americans who reported getting a flu shot received vaccination in their physician's office. About 20% got their flu shot at a retail pharmacy.



Where did you get your flu shot (choose one response that best describes the location you got your flu shot)

Your regular physician's office	41.9
Retail pharmacy	19.8
Walk in clinic	12.6
Work place	18.5
Some other place	7.2

Key Attitudes

- More American thought that washing their hands or using hand sanitizer were effective methods for preventing flu than getting the flu shot. A greater number of Americans thought that washing hands was effective than thought that vaccines were effective in preventing flu
- Attitudes towards effective flu prevention are not necessarily in-line with medical advice or best practice:
 - The percentage of Americans who believed that flu vaccines are effective in preventing flu was similar to the percentages of Americans who thought taking vitamins and supplements, being in shape, or avoiding crowds are effective ways to prevent flu.
 - Slightly more Americans rated “eating healthy in general” than flu vaccine as an effective way to prevent flu
 - Almost half of Americans believe that dressing warmly is an effective way to prevent flu

	Effective Net
Flu Vaccine	56%
Washing hands	84%
Using hand sanitizer	68%
Eating certain foods or beverages	37%
Eating healthy in general	60%
Taking vitamins or supplements	53%
Being fit	57%
Avoiding crowds	59%
Dressing warmly	49%

- Most Americans know that flu is not just a bad cold.
- More Americans believe that it is unlikely they will get flu than likely
- As many Americans are concerned about getting flu as are not concerned.
- As many Americans agree that having a strong immune system is enough to protect them from the flu as those who disagree.
- 16% of Americans think that flu vaccines are not safe
- One in five think that vaccines are expensive, and three-quarters believe that vaccines are available in the places convenient to them.

- 40% of Americans agree that most of their friends get a flu shot, suggesting that getting a flu shot is seen as fairly common.

	Net Agree	Neutral	Net Disagree
Flu is just a bad cold	17%	20%	63%
It is UNLIKELY that I will get a flu this flu season	41%	36%	23%
I am concerned about getting a flu	35%	31%	34%
Having a strong immune system is enough to protect you from the flu	33%	33%	34%
Over the counter medicines relieve flu symptoms so I can go to work or school	32%	38%	31%
I am opposed to vaccination in general	20%	21%	59%
Flu vaccines are NOT safe	16%	30%	53%
Flu vaccines are available in places convenient to me	76%	17%	7%
Flu vaccines are expensive	20%	31%	50%
You may get flu from a flu vaccine	35%	28%	37%
Most of my friends get a flu shot	41%	40%	19%

Key Conclusions:

The overall vaccination rate (here, the percentage of people who indicated that they have had a flu shot) is 40%. This is in accord with government statistics.

The vaccination rate reaches 50% only among individuals 50 years of age and older. Interestingly, the vaccination rate of 18 to 24 year olds is higher than any other under 50 group. This may be due to efforts to encourage vaccination on college campuses.

Many Americans believe that it is unlikely that they will get flu and only about a third are concerned about catching it. Despite the emerging epidemic, flu may not be a relevant issue for most Americans.

Other methods of flu prevention are rated as equally effective as the flu vaccine. Since perceived effectiveness of flu vaccination does not differentiate it from other ways of preventing the flu, some individuals may rely on these alternatives to prevent flu instead of vaccination.

16% of Americans thought that vaccines are not safe and slightly over a third of Americans thought that one can catch flu from a vaccine. Vaccine safety and adverse effects seem to be concerns affecting the vaccination rates for some individuals – these tend to be individuals in the highest income brackets (\$150k+).

With few Americans believing that vaccines are expensive and strong majority of Americans stating that vaccines are available in places convenient to them, financial and structural barriers to access do not seem to be factors for most Americans.