General anesthesia is a “teachable moment” for seasonal influenza vaccination in pediatric patients

Tyler Morrissey MD, Tessa Mandler MD, Myron Yaster MD, Kim Strupp MD,
and the Influenza Vaccination Group

Section of Pediatric Anesthesiology, Department of Anesthesiology, Children’s Hospital Colorado, Aurora CO

BACKGROUND
A “teachable moment” is an event that “motivates individuals to spontaneously adopt risk-reducing health behaviors” (e.g., smoking cessation before surgery). Influenza (“flu”) vaccination is recommended at all healthcare visits for patients 6 months of age and older.

HYPOTHESIS
Anesthesia is a teachable moment for flu vaccination and creating a standardized process to offer flu vaccines to all patients undergoing anesthesia will significantly increase the number of patients vaccinated.

METHODS
A standardized “best practice” process was developed to offer flu vaccinations to all patients undergoing elective general anesthesia (M-F). A standing order for the vaccine was developed. After determining eligibility and obtaining consent, the vaccine was placed on the patient’s chart to be given in OR after induction of general anesthesia. Immunization documentation in MyChart (Epic.com) and printed in after-visit summary.

RESULTS
Weekly Perioperative Influenza Vaccine Administration

CONCLUSIONS
Actively offering flu vaccinations to pediatric patients undergoing general anesthesia significantly increased the number of vaccinations. Multidisciplinary collaboration between anesthesia, perioperative nursing, pharmacy, infectious disease, and surgery was essential for successful implementation of this practice change.

IMPLICATIONS
General anesthesia and surgery is a teachable moment for immunization and may be a model for other childhood vaccinations, including the COVID-19 vaccine.

DISCLOSURES
The authors have nothing to disclose.

REFERENCES

INFLUENZA VACCINATION GROUP
James Thomas MD1, Suchitra Rao MD2, Katherine Klockau PharmD1, Regina Hoefner-Noetz MS BSN RN CPAN CPN FASPAN4, Emily Parra MS3, BSN, RN 1. University of Colorado Department of Anesthesiology 2. University of Colorado Department of Infectious Diseases 3. Children’s Hospital Colorado Department of Pharmacy 4. Children’s Hospital Colorado Periop Services