**EBS 2 Description: Flu-FIT and Flu-FOBT Program**



### Description

The Flu-FIT and Flu-FOBT Program allows health care providers to increase access to colorectal cancer screening by offering home tests to patients at the time of their annual influenza (flu) vaccination. The program is designed to increase CRCS rates by conveying the importance of screening and getting an annual flu shot. The message to patients is that "just like a flu shot, you need FIT or FOBT every year." Nurses or medical assistants are provided a variety of tools to assist with offering a home FIT or FOBT kit to eligible patients, including visual aids for explaining the test to patients (including foods to avoid to prevent false positive results), simple written instructions for how to self-administer the test, video instructions, and stamped envelopes for completing and returning the kit to the laboratory. These materials are provided in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Nurses are encouraged to use whichever materials they find most useful to encourage patients to complete FIT or FOBT.

## Community Preventive Services Task Force Finding

This program is an example of small media interventions (Colorectal Cancer Screening) and one-on-one education interventions (Colorectal Cancer Screening), which are recommended by the Community Preventive Services Task Force, as found in the *Guide to Community Preventive Services*.

## Time Required

The intervention takes just a few minutes per patient and is implemented concurrently at seasonal flu vaccination clinics. One to 2 hours of staff training are required initially, with periodic brief review and reinforcement of program procedures and progress by a practice team leader or supervisor during the intervention.

## Intended Audience

The Flu-FIT and Flu-FOBT Program is designed for patients aged 50-75 years who are both due for CRCS and receive annual flu shots during primary care visits or at drop-in flu shot clinics. Patients are considered due for CRCS if they have not had one of the following: FOBT or FIT in the past year, a flexible sigmoidoscopy in the past 5 years, or a colonoscopy in the past 10 years.

## Suitable Settings

The Flu-FIT and Flu-FOBT Program can be implemented in community health centers, pharmacies, managed care organizations, and other health care settings where flu shots are provided and where FIT or FOBT is offered for average-risk colorectal cancer screening. To be successful, health care organizations offering Flu-FIT and Flu-FOBT Programs must be able to assure follow up of abnormal FIT or FOBT tests with diagnostic colonoscopy.

## Required Resources

Required resources to implement the program include the following (available at program website):

* Mailed FLU-FIT and FLU-FOBT announcements
* Clinic posters to advertise the program
* Algorithms for patient flow and for using electronic medical records to assess FIT or FOBT eligibility
* Script to introduce/explain FIT or FOBT with flu shots to patients
* Visual aids to use when offering FIT or FOBT to patients
* Multilingual materials to explain why colorectal cancer screening is important, completion instructions, and video instructions
* Pre-addressed and pre-stamped mailing pouches
* Log sheet to record flu shots and kits dispensed
* Clinic nursing staff

## Key Findings from Studies

Three studies were reviewed for this summary. Located in the San Francisco and Fresno, California, metropolitan areas, the study sites included:

* Six community-based primary care clinics offering flu shots (Study 1): Past-year CRCS rates, based on completion of the FOBT or any CRCS test in the past 12 months, increased in both study groups during the study period. The proportion of patients completing FOBT in the past year increased in the intervention group from 21.4% to 33.8% (12.4 percentage points), compared with an increase from 17.6% to 21.7% (4.1 percentage points) in the control group (p=.01).  Likewise, the proportion of patients completing any CRCS test in the past year increased in the intervention group from 32.5% to 45.5% (13.0 percentage points), compared with an increase from 31.3% to 35.6% (4.3 percentage points) in the control group (p=.018).
* A hospital-based primary care clinic offering flu clinics (Study 2): By the end of the study period, 21.6% of the intervention group completed FOBT and 24.2% completed any CRCS test, compared with 11.8% and 13.4%, respectively, of the control group (p<.001 for both analyses).
  + Among patients due for CRCS when they received their flu shot, participants in the intervention group were more than twice as likely to complete FOBT (OR=2.25) and become up to date with CRCS (OR=2.22) by the end of the study period compared with patients in the control group (p<.05 for both analyses).
* Five flu shot clinics operated by an integrated managed care organization (Study 3): Among patients initially not up to date with CRCS guidelines, the percentage of patients who became up to date by the end of the flu season was significantly higher in the intervention group (68.0%) than in the control group (20.7%) (p<.001).  Further analyses demonstrated that intervention group patients initially overdue for CRCS were 11 times more likely than control group patients initially overdue for CRCS to be up to date with CRCS when the study ended (p<.001).

Sources:

* Potter MB, Walsh JM, Yu TM, Gildengorin G, Green LW, McPhee SJ. (2011). The effectiveness of the FLU-FOBT program in primary care a randomized trial. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 41 (1), 9-16.
* Potter MB, Phengrasamy L, Hudes ES, McPhee SJ, Walsh JM. (2009). Offering annual fecal occult blood tests at annual flu shot clinics increases colorectal cancer screening rates. Annals of Family Medicine, 7 (1), 17-23.
* Potter MB, Ackerson LM, Gomez V, Walsh JM, Green LW, Levin TR, Somkin CP. (2013). Effectiveness and reach of the FLU-FIT program in an integrated health care system: a multisite randomized trial. American Journal of Public Health, 103 (6), 1128-1133.

<https://rtips.cancer.gov/rtips/programDetails.do?programId=1084580>