

Older people urged to get high-dose flu vaccine

By Cynthia H. Craft, Sacramento Bee

Older people, believed to be at greater risk for developing severe flu symptoms this season, should seek a high-dose vaccine instead of the standard dose even if they are frail and in long-term care, researchers say.

Federal officials approved the high-dose vaccine for people ages 65 and up about five years ago. It was first tested on independent, healthy older adults with an average age of 73 years – and proved successful at triggering stronger immune responses.

Now, new data show that the high-dose vaccine outperformed the standard dose in residents of long-term care facilities with an average age between 86 and 87, according to University of Pittsburgh researchers. The findings are considered promising, as the predominant virus has already mutated, making for a challenging flu season for ailing older people.

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