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People in Switzerland are ignoring flu vaccine recommendations

A study conducted by Zurich University Hospital in collaboration with Groupe Mutuel reveals that only around 19% of at-risk patients in Switzerland are vaccinated against the flu.

Runny noses and coughs herald the start of the flu season. However, how many people are vaccinated against the flu in Switzerland? We don't really know. The Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) recommends that people aged over 65 and those suffering from chronic illnesses get vaccinated against the flu. As for whether they really do, this can usually be measured by a survey.

A study conducted by Zurich University Hospital in collaboration with Groupe Mutuel identified vaccination rates during the 2015/2016, 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 flu seasons, i.e. before the COVID-19 pandemic, based on data relating to policyholders. Drawing on anonymised Groupe Mutuel data, the study analysed the vaccination status of 214,668 people.

The study revealed vaccination rates of around 19% among all the people examined, as well as vaccination rates of up to 40% in certain risk groups, particularly people living in nursing homes. Frequent medical consultations and the presence of chronic lung disease were the factors associated with the greatest likelihood of vaccination. On the other hand, the probability was much lower for people with a high insurance deductible amount. The study shows that, during the period in question, vaccination rates among at-risk patients were below the target of 75% set by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Every year, influenza results in up to 330,000 medical consultations and up to 5,000 hospital admissions in Switzerland. The study showed that data from insured persons can complement the monitoring carried out by the FOPH, and that it offers researchers numerous possibilities for understanding correlations in the field of health. People in at-risk groups and healthcare providers should be aware of the preventive importance of vaccination and should seriously consider vaccination at this time.

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About Groupe Mutuel

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As the only comprehensive insurer in Switzerland, Groupe Mutuel is the reference partner in the field of health and retirement benefits for private and corporate customers. Its overall turnover exceeds CHF 5.3 billion. Thanks to tailored solutions, whether in basic insurance (LAMal/KVG) or supplemental insurance (LCA/VVG), it is the third largest health insurer in Switzerland.

Groupe Mutuel also offers an extensive range of products in individual retirement benefits and patrimony insurance. Based in Martigny, the insurer provides companies of all sizes solutions with loss of earnings in the event of illness, accident insurance (LAA/UVG) and occupational pension plans (LPP/BVG).