

*An Analysis of the Effects of Education and Ethics Priming on College Students' Immunization Beliefs*

Education has always been considered an effective way to promote immunizations and other positive preventive health behaviors. In a study which involved surveying 345 undergraduate college students, specific informational strategies were found to both improve individual knowledge of the influenza vaccine and also increase openness to being immunized against influenza. Further, this study showed that openness to immunization was increased even more when individuals were primed with a statement about the risks of transmission of the influenza virus to others. The belief among a subset of respondents that the influenza vaccine was not effective correlated with a stated lack of concern about the risks of transmission to others and a lack of concern about other community member's health during influenza outbreaks. The same belief that the influenza vaccine was not effective also correlated with respondent's stated lack of concern about their own health during influenza outbreaks. The results of this study suggest that education, especially education targeted towards communicating risk of transmission and the risk for community member's health, could be effective in changing the opinions and thus the actions of college students who might otherwise be skeptical about the benefits of vaccines and increase the likelihood that they would themselves be immunized against influenza.

Learning Objective: Describe the effect that education has on college students' opinions towards the influenza vaccine.