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Abstract

Introduction: Influenza like illness (ILI) is the most common cause of absenteeism in the workplace. This study was designed to assess the effect of anti-influenza vaccination on reducing illness and absenteeism among health care workers (HCWs) of two hospitals of Mashhad University of Medical Sciences in Iran from September 2015 through June 2016.

Methods: In this cohort study 166 health care workers in two academic hospitals were observed for 9 months. Influenza vaccine was administered to 83 HCWs on a voluntary basis in September 2015. Respiratory symptoms and absenteeism due to influenza like illness in vaccinated group were evaluated and compared with non- vaccinated group every 3 months. A questionnaire was also administered for collecting the socio-demographic and occupational data such as age, sex, job, … in the studied groups.

Results: The mean of age in the vaccinated and non-vaccinated groups was 36.69 and 37.12 respectively (P=0.73). There was no significant difference between two studied groups regarding sex, marital status, hospital, shift of work (fixed or circular), educational degree, smoking and history of atopy. The individuals who were absent from work due to influenza during the first and second trimester were 13 (15.7%) and 7(8.4%) in the case group and 31(37.3%) and 24(28.9%) in the control group respectively (P=0.003, P=0.001). During 9 months of study 23(27.7%) individuals in case group and 51(61.4%) in control group were absent from work. (P=0.001)

Conclusion: In this study the vaccinated group showed lower flu-like symptoms and sickness absenteeism compared with unvaccinated group. Therefore we can conclude influenza vaccination is very effective in reducing sickness absenteeism in hospital personnel and annual influenza vaccination is recommended for this job groups.

Biography

Dr. Ehsan Rafiei Manesh has been graduated from Tehran University of Medical Sciences as Medical Doctor, with the specialties in Occupational Medicine. Now he is head of occupational medicine department of faculty of medicine in the Mashhad University of Medical Sciences. Presently he has been working on the work related musculoskeletal disorders, ergonomics and occupational health in health care workers.

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Mashhad University of Medical Sciences. Mashhad, Iran

