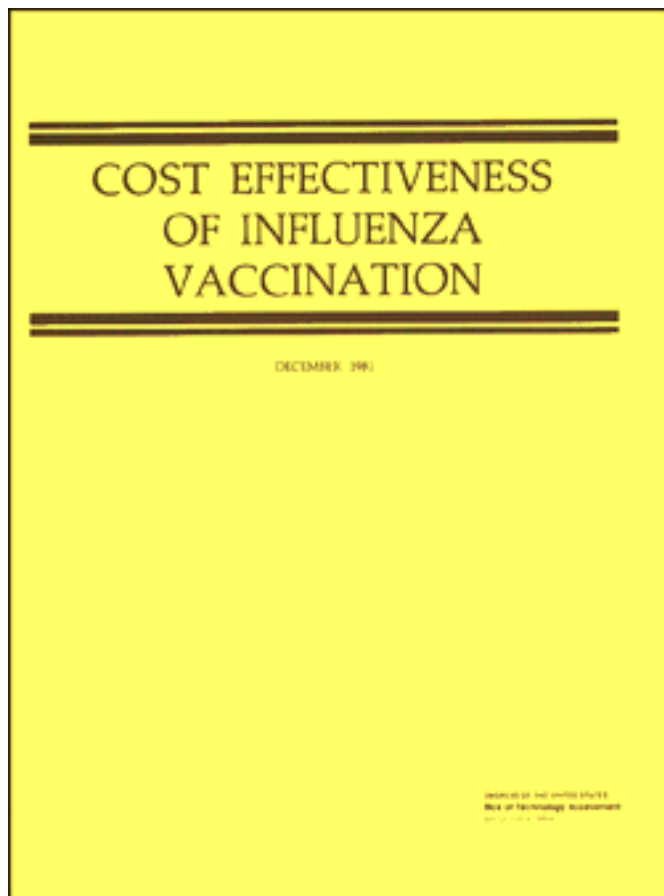


Cost Effectiveness of Influenza Vaccination

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Foreword

In September 1979, the Office of Technology Assessment published a report *A Review of Selected Vaccine and Immunization Policies*. The report included a case study of pneumococcal vaccine, as part of which a cost-effectiveness analysis of the vaccine was carried out using a computer-based simulation model. The study found that, given the range of factors involved, vaccinations would entail positive net medical expenditures for every age group and would be most cost effective for those 65 years of age or older. Net health effects were expressed in quality-adjusted life years (QALYs). The cost-effectiveness ratio was about \$4,800 per QALY gained for all ages and \$1,000 per QALY for ages 65 years and older. These findings stimulated considerable interest and helped lead to passage of an amendment (1980) to the medicare law to cover pneumococcal vaccine.

The report noted that influenza vaccine was likely to be cost effective as well. Early in 1980, the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee (now Energy and Commerce) asked OTA to conduct a cost-effectiveness analysis of influenza vaccine and influenza immunization programs similar to that developed for pneumococcal vaccine.

The study was conducted by OTA staff using a computer model similar to that of the pneumococcal vaccine study. A number of expert consultants assisted with the study. Drafts of the final report were reviewed by the Health Program Advisory Committee, chaired by Dr. Sidney Lee, and by approximately 25 other individuals with expertise in economics, vaccines, or health policy (see *Acknowledgments* in app. F). We are grateful for their assistance.



JOHN H. GIBBONS
Director

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OTA Health Program Staff

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