



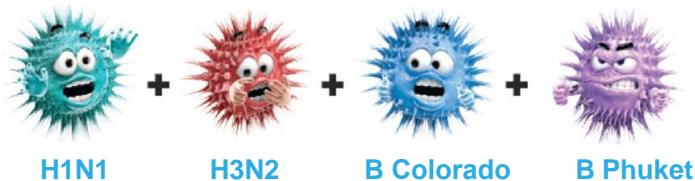
Flu vaccination - FAQ

What is influenza?

Influenza, commonly called “the flu”, is a contagious disease caused by a virus which spreads easily from person to person. Compared with other viral respiratory infections such as the common cold, influenza infection can cause severe illness and can also precipitate serious and life-threatening complications. Influenza viruses infect many parts of the body, including the nose, throat and lungs. Influenza symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue, muscle aches, headaches, runny nose and watery eyes. Although the fever and body aches usually last for 3 – 5 days, coughing and fatigue can persist for two weeks or more.

What vaccines do we use this year?

The influenza vaccine virus strains selected by the World Health Organisation for the 2018 Northern Hemisphere influenza season were chosen with the goals of providing the broader possible coverage and making the vaccine more effective than the 2017 vaccine was. Quadrivalent Influenza vaccines include two influenza type A and two influenza type B lineage viruses. This is the same type of vaccine the Government are using as part of the National Program to fight influenza in Australia.



H1N1

H3N2

B Colorado

B Phuket

- A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1) pdm09 - like virus;
- A(H3N2)/Switzerland/8060/2017-like virus
- B/Colorado/06/2017 - like virus (B/Victoria lineage)
- B/Phuket/3073/2013 - like virus (B/Yamagata lineage)

3 things you might not know about the flu shot!

- There is no live virus in the flu shot
- The composition of the vaccine changes every year
- The flu shot is safe for pregnant women at all stages of their pregnancy

How effective is the influenza vaccine?

The influenza vaccine provides a good level of protection. It is important to know that it takes up to two weeks after vaccination for a person to develop protection against influenza infection. Also, the influenza vaccine does not protect against respiratory illness caused by other viruses, such as the common cold.

Can I get the flu from the vaccine?

No, the viruses in the vaccine are inactivated and incapable of causing influenza or flu. You are protected from influenza by antibodies that are formed by the immune system's response to the vaccine.

How does the vaccine work?

Flu Vaccines cause antibodies to develop in the body about two weeks after vaccination. These antibodies provide protection against infection with the viruses that are in the vaccine. The seasonal flu vaccine protects against the influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season.

What are the benefits of flu vaccinations?

There are lots of reasons to get a flu vaccine each year. Flu vaccination can keep you from getting sick from flu. Protecting yourself from flu also protects the people around you who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness. Flu vaccination can help protect people who are at greater risk of getting seriously ill from flu, like older adults, people with chronic health conditions and young children (especially infants younger than 6 months old who are too young to get vaccinated).

Flu vaccination can reduce the risk of more serious flu outcomes, like hospitalizations and even deaths.

Why do I need to get vaccinated against the flu every year?

There are two main reasons for getting a yearly flu vaccine:

- Flu viruses are frequently changing and vaccines may be updated from one season to the next to protect against the most recent and common circulating strains.
- A person's immune protection from influenza vaccination declines over time and annual vaccination is recommended.

What are the possible side effects from the flu shot?

Possible redness, soreness, itching, bruising or mild swelling at the injection site. This usually clears within 1-2 days. Sometimes a tender lump under the arm appears (a lymph gland) that may be present for several days. Occasionally people develop a mild fever within 1 –2 days of the vaccination and occasionally muscle aches, headache or a general feeling of unwellness. This usually lasts no more than 1-2 days. Allergic reaction in those allergic to vaccine components.

I am allergic to penicilline. Can I still have the flu shot?

Yes, the vaccine does not contain any penicillin so it is safe to have the vaccine even if you are allergic to penicillin

Is it safe for me to get the flu shot if I am pregnant?

Yes, the flu vaccine can be safely given during any stage of pregnancy. Pregnant women are at increased risk of severe disease or complications from the flu. Vaccinating against flu during pregnancy can not only protect pregnant women but provide ongoing protection to a newborn baby for the first six months after birth. If in doubt, please speak to your doctor to confirm it's safe to continue.

Should I receive the vaccine if I am feeling unwell?

If you are suffering from an acute feverish illness (temperature equal to or above 38.5 °C) you should not receive the vaccine until you have fully recovered.

If you are feeling unwell at the time of your vaccination appointment, please discuss your symptoms with the nurse or the doctor running the clinic.

If I get an adverse event/reaction after I have a flu vaccine, where can I report it?

You can report adverse events to Corporate Care on 1300 79 74 10 and your doctor. Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) can also be reported to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) website ([click here](#)). You can also report adverse events to:

ACT - ACT Health Department - 026205 2300

NSW - 1300 066 055 (To connect to your local Public Health Unit)

NT - NT Department of Health - 08 8922 8044

QLD - Queensland Health - 07 3328 9888 or complete an AEFI initial report form available at [Queensland Government - Immunisation](#)

SA - Immunisation Section, Department of Health - 1300 232 272

TAS - Direct to TGA - 1800 044 114

VIC - SAEFVIC - 03 9345 4143 or [SAEFVIC](#)

WA - State Health Department - WAVSSS - 08 9321 1312

