

Did you know?

- You **can not** get influenza from the vaccine. The vaccine is inactivated, hence, it does not contain any live viruses and cannot cause the illness. Some people may experience mild flu-like symptoms after having the influenza vaccine but these should only last a few days.⁸
- You can come down with influenza close to receiving your vaccine or just after, as it takes about 2 weeks for your body to respond after vaccination.⁸
- Vaccines, like other medicines, can have side effects, however the majority of side effects are minor. Common side effects following influenza vaccination include soreness, redness, pain and swelling at the injection site, drowsiness, tiredness, muscle aches and low grade temperature.⁸
- These side effects are usually mild and go away within a few days, usually without any treatment. Serious reactions to immunisation are very rare, however if they do occur a doctor should be consulted.



Have you had your annual influenza vaccination?

Speak to your staff nurse
or healthcare provider for more
information on influenza vaccination.

References: 1. WHO. Factsheet: Influenza (Seasonal) [https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-\(seasonal\)](https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-(seasonal)) (Accessed November 2022). 2. Australian Government Department of Health. The Australian Immunisation Handbook 10th Ed (2019 update): Influenza. <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/vaccine-preventable-diseases/influenza-flu> (Accessed November 2022). 3. CDC. How Flu Spreads. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/spread.htm> (Accessed November 2022). 4. CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/symptoms.htm> (Accessed July 2020). 5. Kuster SP, Shah PS, Coleman BL, Lam PP, Tong A, Wormsbecker A, & McGeer A, 2011. 'Incidence of influenza in healthy adults and healthcare workers: a systematic review and meta-analysis' PLoS ONE 6(10):e26239. 6. National Centre for Immunization Research & Surveillance Factsheet; Influenza. March 2022. https://www.ncirs.org.au/sites/default/files/2022-03/Influenza-fact-sheet_March-2022%20update_FINAL.pdf (Accessed November 2022). 7. CDC. Key Facts About Seasonal Influenza. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm#:~:text=An%20annual%20seasonal%20flu%20vaccine,flu%2Drelated%20death%20in%20children> (Accessed November 2022). 8. CDC. Misconceptions about Seasonal Flu and Flu Vaccines. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/misconceptions.htm> (Accessed November 2022). 9. ATAGI Advice on Seasonal Influenza Vaccines 2022. <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/atagi-advice-on-seasonal-influenza-vaccines-in-2022> (Accessed November 2022)

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Protect yourself and your patients from **INFLUENZA**



Vaccination is the best way to prevent
influenza and its complications.¹

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Why is it important for healthcare workers to have an annual influenza vaccination?

As a healthcare worker, you are recognised as a priority group strongly recommended for annual influenza vaccination by the World Health Organisation and the local recommending body, the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI).^{1,2}

1. The influenza virus is highly contagious, and can easily spread from person to person:

- when inhaling the respiratory aerosols produced by an infected person coughing, sneezing or talking^{2,3}
- by touching contaminated surfaces or objects such as door knobs, phones etc then touching your eyes, mouth or nose.³

2. Influenza can be debilitating, and is more severe than a cold, where you mostly have a runny nose and sore throat. Influenza has a sudden onset of symptoms that can include a fever, body aches, chills fatigue and severe cough, which can last for up to 2 weeks.^{1,4}

3. Due to close contact with patients, healthcare workers have a higher chance of contracting influenza.⁵

4. As a duty of care to vulnerable patients i.e. if influenza is passed on to an elderly patient, infant or someone with underlying conditions, the consequences may be severe.²

5. Help protect your family from influenza, and consider what may be missed if any of you are unwell e.g. holidays, days off work as a carer.

6. If you have influenza, you can be infectious to others for the 24 hours before symptoms start, and continue to be infectious for about a week after symptoms start.^{2,6}

7. Influenza vaccination is the most effective method of preventing influenza.^{1,2} In terms of the efficacy and effectiveness of influenza vaccine, this depends primarily on the age and health of the vaccine recipient and the degree of similarity between the virus strains in the vaccine and those circulating in the community.⁸

8. There are many benefits from influenza vaccination and preventing influenza is always important, but in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, it's even more important to do everything possible to reduce illnesses and preserve scarce health care resources.⁷ The influenza vaccine can be given at the same time as the COVID-19 vaccine.⁹

9. The Influenza viruses are constantly changing which means the vaccine needs to change each year as the virus does. Protection from an influenza vaccine also fades over time. So, yearly influenza vaccination is recommended to renew your protection.^{1,7}

10. The influenza virus does not discriminate. Even fit and healthy people can catch influenza. The past is no predictor of the future.

