



ARE THERE SIDE EFFECTS FROM THE VACCINE?

- The flu vaccine is very safe. Most people have little or no reaction to the vaccine.
- Some people may get a sore arm (redness, swelling, tenderness)
- Others may have a fever, headache, or muscle aches but these are mild and only last a day or two.
- Severe side effects and allergic reactions are rare.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM INFLUENZA

- Get your annual flu vaccine
- **Clean, Cover and Contain**
 - Wash your hands frequently
 - Cover your coughs and sneezes
 - Contain your illness by staying home if you are ill and resting
- Keep your hands away from your face
- Keep common surface areas clean and disinfected.

IT'S OK TO ASK NURSES, DOCTORS AND OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IF THEY HAVE CLEANED THEIR HANDS

REMIND VISITORS TO CLEAN THEIR HANDS

CAN THE INFLUENZA VACCINE AND PNEUMOCOCCAL VACCINE BE GIVEN TOGETHER?

Influenza vaccines and pneumococcal vaccines are often given at one time because people at risk of complications from influenza or pneumonia are often the same.

- It must be given at a different injection site on your body.

Pneumococcal vaccine is normally given only once in a lifetime.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE ADVICE ON INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION?

Contact your local public health office, physician, nurse or pharmacist. You can also read more about influenza on the following website: www.fightflu.ca



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INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Information for Patients, Residents, Families & Visitors

INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL PROGRAM

WHAT IS INFLUENZA (THE FLU)?

Influenza (commonly known as “the flu”) is an infection of the airways caused by the influenza virus. Influenza is easily caught and easily spread.

Symptoms include:

- sudden high fever
- headache
- loss of appetite
- severe muscle aches and pain
- extreme fatigue and weakness
- chills
- dry cough
- sweating

WHAT CAN INFLUENZA DO TO YOU?

- A bout of influenza can last 5 to 10 days.
- While most people recover fully, influenza may lead to more severe and life threatening illnesses, such as pneumonia.
- It can worsen a current medical condition such as diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, or kidney disease.

HOW IS THE INFLUENZA VIRUS SPREAD?

- When someone who has the flu sneezes, coughs, or even talks, the flu virus is expelled into the air and may be inhaled by anyone close by.
- The virus may also be spread through direct contact with objects contaminated by the influenza virus, such as toys, eating utensils, and unwashed hands

WHY DO I NEED AN ANNUAL FLU SHOT?

The viruses that cause influenza are continually changing. Because of this the vaccine is updated every year. You need an annual flu vaccine to make sure your body forms antibodies against the new influenza strains.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR THE VACCINE TO WORK?

Protection begins about 2 weeks after immunization and generally provides protection for up to a year after receiving the vaccine.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE VACCINE?

- It has been shown to prevent illness in approximately 70-90% of healthy children and adults.
- As with any vaccine, it may not protect 100% of all individuals at risk.
- For most people, symptoms are very mild if you do get influenza.
- You might also get another strain of influenza that was not included in the vaccine.

CAN I GET INFLUENZA FROM THE VACCINE?

NO. The influenza vaccine cannot cause influenza because the vaccine does not carry live viruses

People who think they got influenza from the vaccine could be confusing their symptoms with those of another virus, or a mild side-effect of the vaccine.

WHEN SHOULD I GET A FLU SHOT?

October to December is the best time. However, the vaccine can be given any time during the influenza season from October to April.

WHO SHOULD BE IMMUNIZED FOR INFLUENZA?

In NL influenza vaccine is available to all residents. Anyone who wants protection from influenza should consider getting immunized, especially:

- People with chronic conditions requiring regular medical care
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities
- All persons age 60 years and over and children age 6-59 months
- Pregnant women—particularly those in the 3rd trimester
- Health care workers
- Household contacts of people at high risk of influenza complications
- People who provide essential community services

WHO SHOULD NOT BE IMMUNIZED FOR INFLUENZA?

- Influenza vaccine should not be given to people who have had an anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of vaccine; or have had an anaphylactic reaction to any of the vaccine components, with the exception of egg
- Individuals with a serious acute illness should not be vaccinated until symptoms have improved.
- Infants under 6 months of age