

ARE THERE SIDE EFFECTS FROM THE VACCINE?

- The flu vaccine is very safe. Most individuals have little or no reaction to the vaccine.
- Some may get a sore arm (redness, swelling, tenderness).
- Others may have a fever, headache, or muscle aches but these are mild and only last 1-2 days.
- 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.
- 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.**

**REMINDE 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 individuals at risk of complications from influenza or pneumonia are often the same. The two vaccines must be given at a different injection site on the body.

Pneumococcal vaccine is normally given only once in a lifetime.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE ADVICE ON INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION?

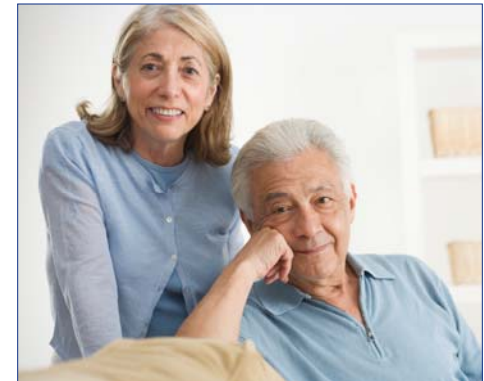
Contact your local Public Health office, physician, nurse, or pharmacist. You can also read more about influenza on the following website: www.canada.ca/flu.



**HAND HYGIENE
THE BEST
WAY TO PREVENT
INFECTION**

IPAC-PAMPH-030.1

INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*Information for Clients,
Residents, Families, and
Visitors*

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

HOW IS THE INFLUENZA VIRUS SPREAD?

- When an individual who has the flu sneezes, coughs, or even talks, the flu virus is expelled into the air and can be spread in the mouth, eyes, or nose of individuals nearby.
- 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 VACCINE?

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, 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.
- Individuals 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 VACCINE?

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, the influenza vaccine is available to all residents. Anyone 6 months of age and older who wants protection from influenza should consider getting immunized, especially:

- All individuals age 60 years and over and children age 6 months and older.
- Individuals with chronic conditions requiring regular medical care.
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities.
- Pregnant women, particularly those in the 3rd trimester.
- Healthcare workers.
- Household contacts of individuals at high risk of influenza complications.
- Individuals who provide essential community services.

WHO SHOULD NOT BE IMMUNIZED FOR INFLUENZA?

- Infants under 6 months of age.
- Those 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.
- If you have a fever on the day you are supposed to get immunized, wait until fever is gone.