



Influenza vaccine

About influenza

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to hospitalization or death. The best way to prevent flu is to get a flu vaccine each year.

Benefits of influenza vaccination include:

- prevents influenza illness
- reduces severity of illness in those who get ill
- reduces risk of flu-associated hospitalization
- helps reduce flu complications for people who have certain chronic health conditions
- helps protect mothers during and after pregnancy, and helps protect infants in their first few months of life
- can be lifesaving, especially in children
- may protect people around you

Everyone ages 6 months and older in the U.S. should get a flu vaccine every year with rare exceptions.

For more than 50 years, hundreds of millions of Americans have safely received seasonal flu vaccines, and extensive research supports its safety. Flu vaccination is especially important for people at risk of developing complications, including adults 65 and older and those with chronic health conditions.

Important details

A flu vaccine is needed annually for 2 reasons:

1. Immune protection from vaccination declines over time
2. Flu viruses constantly change, so the composition of flu vaccines is reviewed annually, and vaccines are updated each year.

For people ages 65 and older, there are 3 flu vaccines that are recommended over standard dose, unadjuvanted flu vaccines.

- Fluzone high-dose quadrivalent flu vaccine
- Flublok quadrivalent recombinant flu vaccine
- Fluad quadrivalent adjuvanted flu vaccines

These vaccines are potentially more effective in this age group than standard dose flu vaccines. If none of these vaccines are available at the time of the visit, any other age-appropriate flu vaccine may be used instead.



What to expect after vaccination

While a flu vaccine **cannot** give you flu illness, there are side effects that may be associated with getting a flu shot. These are usually mild and resolve quickly, especially when compared to symptoms of influenza. Side effects may include:

- pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site
- headache
- fever
- muscle aches
- nausea
- tiredness

People sometimes faint after medical procedures, including vaccination. Tell your provider if you feel dizzy or have vision changes or ringing in the ears. As with any medicine, there is a very small chance of a vaccine causing a severe allergic reaction, other serious injury, or death.

Tell your vaccination provider if the person getting the vaccine:

- has an allergy to any of the ingredients in the vaccine
- has ever had Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS)
- has ever had a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose of any other flu vaccine
- is not feeling well

People who should **not** get a flu vaccine include:

- children younger than 6 months of age
- people with severe, life-threatening allergies to any ingredient in a flu vaccine (other than egg proteins)
- people who have had a severe allergic reaction to a dose of influenza vaccine should not receive that flu vaccine again, and might not be able to receive other influenza vaccines

Influenza vaccination statistics

3,700

estimated influenza-associated deaths prevented in the 2022-2023 influenza season

75% reduction

in children's risk of severe, life-threatening influenza due to flu vaccination, reported in a 2022 study

65,000

estimated influenza-associated hospitalizations prevented due to flu vaccine in the 2022-2023 influenza season

For more vaccine information, go to immunize.utah.gov or scan the QR code!

