VaxWorks
health services + training

2027 Influenza (flu) Vaccine

Information Sheet

Influenza is a serious contagious respiratory infection. Annual vaccination reduces the risk of influenza, illness resulting in absenteeism from work and serious complications.

Key points

- Flu can cause fever, cough, muscle aches and severe tiredness; complications include pneumonia.
- Most adults need one influenza vaccine dose each year.
- Influenza vaccines cannot cause flu.

What is the flu?

Influenza (flu) is a viral infection that spreads mainly through droplets and particles released when an infected person breathes, talks, coughs or sneezes. It is different from the common cold. Symptoms often begin suddenly and can last for several days; tiredness and cough may last longer.

Who should be vaccinated

Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for everyone aged 6 months and over. It is even more important for:

- adults aged 65 years and over
- pregnant women, at any stage of pregnancy
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- people with chronic heart, lung, kidney, liver or neurological conditions, diabetes or reduced immunity
- healthcare workers, carers and people in close contact with those at higher risk.

How well does the vaccine work

Protection varies between seasons and between people, depending on how closely the vaccine matches circulating viruses, age and health. Vaccination lowers the risk of influenza illness and can reduce severe illness and hospitalisation. It does not prevent every case of flu.

2027 egg-based vaccine strains

The Australian Influenza Vaccine Committee recommended these three strains for 2027 trivalent egg-based vaccines:

- A/Missouri/11/2025 (H1N1)pdm09-like
- A/Darwin/1454/2025 (H3N2)-like ^
- B/Tokyo/EIS13-175/2025 (Victoria lineage)-like ^

^ *New strain for 2027*

Which vaccine is suitable?

VaxWorks Health Services generally uses the 'standard' egg-based flu vaccine, however there are four types of flu vaccine available:

- Egg-based: inactivated vaccines made using eggs
- Cell-based: inactivated vaccines grown in cultured cells
- Adjuvanted: contains an ingredient that boosts the immune response; particularly useful for adults aged 65 and older
- LAIV (live attenuated): a nasal-spray vaccine containing weakened flu viruses, only approved for children.

For adults aged 65 years and over, the adjuvanted vaccine is preferred. If this is not available, a standard-dose, age-appropriate influenza vaccine is safe and suitable; vaccination should not be delayed.

People with egg allergy, including previous anaphylaxis to eggs, can receive an egg-based influenza vaccine. Egg allergy alone is not a reason to avoid it.

Tell your provider before vaccination

Tell your provider if you have had a serious reaction to influenza vaccine or an ingredient; Guillain-Barré syndrome within 6 weeks of a previous flu vaccine; a severe allergy (including latex); reduced immunity; or significant current illness or fever of 38.5°C or higher.

Mild illness is usually not a reason to delay. Inactivated flu vaccine is safe and recommended during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Possible reactions

Most are mild and short-lived: a sore, red or swollen arm, headache, tiredness, muscle aches or mild fever. Serious allergic reactions are very rare.

Allergic reactions and when to seek help

Remain at the vaccination site for 15 minutes. Call 000 for breathing difficulty, wheezing, tongue or throat swelling, persistent dizziness or collapse. Seek medical advice for serious or unexpected symptoms and contact VaxWorks.

Other clinical advice

Flu vaccine can generally be given with other recommended vaccines. If you develop flu symptoms, stay home while unwell; seek prompt advice for severe illness or if at high risk, as antivirals may help when started early.

Reference: Australian Immunisation Handbook – Influenza (flu) (updated 30 September 2026).

Therapeutic Goods Administration – AIVC recommendations for 2027 influenza vaccines (9 October 2026).

This information sheet was created by VaxWorks Health Services - October 2026.