



## Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Information

The seasonal influenza vaccine protects against viruses that cause influenza, often called the flu. The vaccine does not protect against other viruses or bacteria that cause colds or stomach illness, such as 'stomach flu'. The H1N1 antigen is included in the seasonal flu vaccine this year.

### **Kids need a second dose:**

Children under 9 years of age who have never had a regular seasonal influenza vaccine also need 2 doses, 1 month apart.

### **Pregnant women:**

Influenza vaccination in pregnancy is safe. Please inform us if you are pregnant.

### **Who should not receive a flu vaccine:**

- Children under 6 months of age
- People who have had a life threatening reaction to a previous dose of vaccine.
- Those with a past history Guillain-Barre syndrome, which occurred within 8 weeks of receiving a previous dose of influenza vaccine.
- Note: People with severe egg allergy (including anaphylaxis) can have any influenza vaccine.

### **Additional contraindications to FluMist:**

- Those with weakened immune systems, severe asthma, or active wheezing in past 7 days
- Children receiving ASA-containing therapy
- Infants <2 years
- Pregnant women
- History of egg allergy

## **Influenza vaccine for seniors 65+:**

Free vaccines for community dwelling seniors include Flud<sup>®</sup> (an adjuvanted vaccine that produces an enhanced immune response), Fluviral<sup>®</sup> or Agriflu<sup>®</sup>. Fluzone HD<sup>®</sup> is available for purchase without prescription at select pharmacies and the VCH Travel Clinic (\$80).

### **Adverse reactions:**

Local reactions such as soreness at the injection site occur for up to 2 days in 30% of recipients.

Systemic reactions such as fever, aching muscles and fatigue may occur 6-12 hours after vaccination and last 1-2 days especially in persons receiving the vaccine for the first time. Influenza vaccine cannot cause the flu because it does not contain a live virus.

### **Serious Reactions:**

Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS), a form of paralysis, is usually temporary and can occur after some common infections. GBS may be associated with influenza vaccine in about 1 per million recipients.

During the 2000 influenza season, some people who got the influenza vaccine had a reaction called oculo-respiratory syndrome (ORS). ORS involved eye redness, and in some people, a cough, sore throat or breathing symptoms. Most people who had ORS can be safely vaccinated again, and there have been few reports since 2000.

### **Vaccine safety:**

Influenza vaccine may safely be given at the same time as other vaccines.

Influenza vaccine contains a very small amount of thimerosal as a preservative.

Scientific evidence has proven it to be safe for use in adults, children and pregnant women.

## **Pneumococcal vaccine**

Those over age 65 as well as many patients age 2-64 with chronic medical conditions are also eligible for one time pneumococcal vaccine-ask the doctor if you think you may be eligible

Please wait for 15 minutes  
following your vaccination.