



2023/2024 Seasonal Influenza (Flu) Vaccines

What is it?

- Seasonal influenza vaccine protects against seasonal influenza (flu), a serious respiratory illness caused by a virus. For more information, see [Facts About... Influenza \(Flu\)](#).
- This year there are three different types of publicly funded (free) flu vaccines available:
 - High-dose Quadrivalent vaccine (High-dose QIV), for people 65 years and older, protects against 4 types of flu (two strains of influenza A and two types of influenza B) and has 4 times the antigen of a regular flu shot which may produce a stronger immune response.
 - Trivalent vaccine (TIV-adj), for people 65 years and older, protects against 3 types of flu (two strains of influenza A and one type of influenza B).
 - Quadrivalent vaccine (QIV), for people 6 months and older, protects against 4 types of flu (two strains of influenza A and two strains of influenza B).

How effective is the seasonal flu vaccine?

- You are more likely to be protected from the flu if you get your flu vaccine. People who get the flu vaccine may still get the flu, but they may be less sick and have fewer complications.

Who should receive the flu vaccine?

- People 6 months and older should receive the flu vaccine every year.

The flu vaccine is very important for:

- People at higher risk of having complications from the getting the flu such as:
 - Adults and children with chronic health conditions
 - Pregnant people
 - Indigenous peoples
 - All children 6 months to 4 years of age and people 65 years and older
 - People of any age who are residents of long-term care homes and other chronic care facilities

... over



- Other recommended groups:
 - Health care workers
 - People who provide services to those at high risk
 - Household contacts of people at high risk
 - People who provide essential community services
 - Racialized and other equity deserving communities
 - Poultry industry workers

Who should not get the vaccine?

- Babies under 6 months of age.
- People with serious acute illness should wait until they feel better before getting the flu vaccine.
- People who have had an anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of flu vaccine.
- Individuals who have developed Guillain-Barré syndrome within 6 weeks of a flu vaccine.
- People who have had an allergic reaction to a component in one flu vaccine may be offered another flu vaccine that does not contain that specific component, in consultation with an allergy expert.
- Egg allergy is not a contraindication for flu vaccination.

What is the schedule for the vaccine?

- Children 6 months to less than 9 years of age, who have never had the flu vaccine, require 2 doses given at least 4 weeks apart.
- The flu vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

Are there side effects with the vaccine?

- Flu vaccine is safe and well tolerated. Side effects are usually mild and last a short time and include redness, pain and swelling where the needle was given.
- Severe allergic reactions after vaccination are very rare and may not be related to the vaccine.
- The risk of the vaccine causing serious harm is extremely small. The risk of serious illness and death related to getting the flu is much higher.
- If you think a serious reaction is developing, seek medical attention right away. Any unusual or significant changes in your health or your child's health after the immunization should be reported to a health care provider and the Health Department.

For more information on where to get your flu vaccine, visit durham.ca/flu.

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