


- 1. The best way to avoid the flu: get the flu shot.
- 2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- 3. Wash your hands with soap and water thoroughly and often.
- 4. Keep an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (gel or wipes) handy at work, home and in your car. It needs to be at least 60% alcohol to be effective.
- 5. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissue out.
- 6. Avoid large crowds of people where viruses can spread easily.
- 7. Keep common surfaces and items clean and disinfected.

## FLU VACCINE RECOMMENDATIONS

# NKS Health



Is the Flu Vaccine  
a Good Idea  
for Your Family?

### Need more information about the flu?

Call the service Ontario INFOLINE a 1-877-844-1944  
Or visit [health.gov.on.ca/FluShot](http://health.gov.on.ca/FluShot)

To speak to a registered nurse:

Visit Telehealth Ontario

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/telhealth/>  
or call 1-866-797-0000

To find health care options in your community, visit  
[Ontario.ca/healthcareoptions](http://Ontario.ca/healthcareoptions) or call 1-866-330-6206

### Why should I get the flu shot?

Each year, influenza affects millions of Canadians, with an average of 20 000 hospitalizations and 4000 deaths. Vaccination is recognized as the cornerstone for preventing the flu. The flu shot is recommended to all Canadians however it is a priority for those at high risk of flu-related complications, those capable of transmitting influenza to individuals at high risk or those who provide essential community services.

**WHO SHOULD RECEIVE THE VACCINE?\*****People at high risk of influenza-related complications, including:**

- Adults and children with chronic conditions such as:
  - Cardiac or pulmonary disorders including asthma
  - Diabetes mellitus and other metabolic diseases
  - Cancer, immunodeficiency, immunosuppression (due to underlying disease and/or therapy)
  - Renal disease
  - Anemia or hemoglobinopathy
  - Conditions that compromise the management of respiratory secretions
- Children and adolescents with conditions treated for long periods with acetylsalicylic acid
- All residents of nursing homes or other chronic care facilities
- Seniors aged 65 years or older
- Pregnant women
- Children aged 6 months to 23 months of age
- Persons who are morbidly obese (BMI ≥ 40)
- Aboriginal peoples

**People capable of transmitting influenza to those at high risk of complications, including:**

- Health care and other care providers
- Household contacts of those at high risk and to infants <6 months
- Members of a household expecting a newborn during influenza season
- Women at all stages of pregnancy or breastfeeding mothers
- Those providing regular child care to children 0-23 months
- Those who provide services within closed settings to persons at high risk

**Others:**

- People who provide essential community services
- People in direct contact with avian influenza infected poultry during culling
- Healthy people aged 5-64 years should be encouraged to receive the vaccine even if they are not in the above groups

**WHO SHOULD NOT RECEIVE THE VACCINE?\***

- People who have had an anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose or to any of the vaccine ingredients, with the exception of egg components.



CANADIAN  
PHARMACISTS  
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DU CANADA

NCS HEALTH

*I am on a Biologic and was told to avoid live vaccines: Is it safe to have the flu shot?*

*There are 8 current flu vaccines in Canada. 7 by injection are not live: Agriflu, Fluviral, Fluzone, Influvac, Vaxigrip, Fluad, Intanza and ARE safe.*

*New in 2009 is the nasal spray FluMist which is live and NOT recommended. This is not covered so not often seen.*

**COUNSELLING POINTS\***

- Soreness or redness at the injection site lasting 1-2 days is common but rarely interferes with daily living
- Prophylactic acetaminophen may minimize pain at injection site
- While severe reactions are uncommon (e.g., allergic reaction), if they occur, contact your health care provider
- The flu shot cannot cause the flu since the vaccine does not contain live virus
- The flu typically lasts for 7-10 days, but the cough and weakness may continue for up to 6 weeks
- The flu shot provides protection up to 12 months; immunization is required each year
- This year's flu shot protects against the H1N1 flu virus as well as two other strains of flu
- You still need to get immunized this year as the vaccination does not protect for life
- October to mid-November is the best time for immunization, but the vaccine may still be given in the winter months
- Other measures to prevent the spread of influenza:
  - Cover your mouth and nose with tissues or clothing when sneezing or coughing
  - Wash hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub
  - Stay home when you have a fever

*I am allergic to eggs and was told I could not get the flu shot. Now this year the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has concluded that egg-allergic individuals may be vaccinated against influenza using TIV trivalent vaccine. Those with an anaphylactic allergy to eggs should still avoid the shot however others should simply follow the precaution to remain for monitoring for 30 min following the vaccine.*