

2025-2026 Enhanced Influenza Vaccine

For adults 65 years and older

What is influenza

- Influenza is caused by a virus that spreads easily by coughing, sneezing and direct contact with nose and throat secretions.
- It can result in hospitalization and death, especially in very young children, the elderly and those who have underlying health conditions.
- Symptoms include sudden onset of fever, cough, chills, muscle aches, headache, and a runny nose.
- Infected people can spread the virus to others before they show any symptoms.

How can I prevent getting or spreading influenza?

- **Get immunized every year** to protect yourself and those around you.
- Stay home when you feel sick.
- Clean your hands regularly.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean your hands if soap and water are unavailable.
- Cover your mouth when coughing and your nose and mouth when sneezing to prevent direct contact with droplets from the nose or throat.
- Clean and disinfect all surfaces regularly.

Who can get this vaccine for free?

- To help create a stronger immune response, enhanced vaccines are available for all individuals **65 years and older**.

Who should not get this vaccine?

- Persons who have a serious acute illness, with or without a fever, should delay immunizations until they feel better.
- People who had a serious or life-threatening reaction to a previous dose of any influenza vaccine, or any components in the vaccine (excluding egg).
- People who developed a neurological disorder called Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of a previous influenza immunization.

How soon will I be protected after getting immunized?

- Protection (antibodies) develops within 2 weeks after immunization in most healthy individuals.
- Effectiveness varies depending on the age, the immune response of the person being immunized, and the match between the vaccine viral strains and the influenza viral strains circulating in the community.

What are possible reactions to the vaccine?

- **Vaccines are very safe. It is much safer to get the vaccine than to get influenza illness.**
- Expected and temporary reactions occurring 2 to 3 days after vaccination include injection site pain, redness and swelling, muscle pain, headache, generally feeling unwell, and chills.
- Most reactions resolve within 3 days.

Less common reactions:

- Oculorespiratory syndrome (ORS). Tell your public health nurse, physician, or nurse practitioner if you have experienced sore red itchy eyes and respiratory problems (difficulty breathing, cough, wheeze, chest tightness, sore throat) with or without facial swelling following a previous influenza vaccine.
- The background rate of GBS from any cause (including influenza disease) is 1-2 cases per 100,000 persons/year (which means about 10-20 cases per million people/year). Investigations have shown either no risk or a very small attributable risk of GBS in roughly 1 case per million doses/year from influenza vaccine.
- Those immunized should be monitored (i.e. stay at the clinic) for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is an extremely rare possibility of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. This reaction can be treated and occurs in less than one in one million people who get the vaccine. If this happens after you leave the clinic, get medical attention or call 911 right away.

Who should you report reactions to?

- **If you have any concerns about the symptoms you develop after receiving the vaccine, call 811. If you received your vaccination from a pharmacist, please consult them first when possible.**
- For more information, speak with the vaccine provider or contact your local public health office, your physician, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or by calling 811.

What strains are included in this year's influenza vaccines?

NOTE: These vaccines cannot cause influenza because they do not contain any live influenza viruses.

Influenza vaccines for the 2025-26 season contain antigens to protect against the following strains:

A/Victoria/4897/2022 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus
A/Croatia/10136RV/2023 (H3N2)-like virus
B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus

Provincial immunization fact sheets are available at www.saskatchewan.ca/immunize.



Reference: [Canadian Immunization Guide](#)
2025 product monographs.

What do injectable influenza vaccines contain?

FLUAD® contains this year's recommended influenza strains, MF59C.1 (an adjuvant), citric acid, polysorbate 80, sodium citrate, sorbitan trioleate, squalene, water for injection, calcium chloride dehydrate, disodium phosphate dehydrate, magnesium chloride hexahydrate, potassium chloride, potassium dihydrogen phosphate, sodium chloride and may contain trace amounts of cetyltrimethylammonium bromide (CTAB), formaldehyde, hydrocortisone, kanamycin, neomycin and ovalbumin (egg protein) from the manufacturing process. Latex and preservative free.

FLUZONE® High Dose contains this year's recommended influenza strains, sodium chloride, sodium phosphate (dibasic anhydrous), sodium phosphate (monobasic anhydrous), water for injection, and trace amounts of formaldehyde, egg protein, sucrose and Triton® X-100. Does not contain latex, gelatin, antibiotics or preservatives. It is available from public health and is only for individuals who cannot receive FLUAD.