

# Influenza (Flu) Vaccine Information

**What is Influenza (flu)?** is an upper airway infection caused by the influenza virus. Influenza can cause serious complications, and even death. Young children, pregnant women, the elderly, and those with chronic conditions are at especially high risk of severe influenza illness. The virus is easily spread by coughing, sneezing, or close contact. It can also spread by touching a contaminated object, and then not washing your hands before touching your own eyes, mouth, or nose.

## The flu shot is the best way to prevent influenza virus.

### Who can get the flu vaccine?

Everyone 6 months of age and older is recommended to get the flu vaccine once a year.

In Yukon, there are three different types of flu vaccines available:

- **FluMist** is available to 2-17 year olds (nasal spray)
- **Fluzone** is available to anyone over 6 months
- **Fluzone High Dose** is available to those 65 years of age and older

Children under 9 years of age who have never had a seasonal influenza vaccine need 2 doses. The second dose of vaccine is important to raise their level of protection and should be given 4 weeks after the first dose.

### Who should not be vaccinated?

- Anyone with a previous history of anaphylaxis to a previous dose of influenza vaccine
- Anyone with a previous history of Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS) 6 weeks after an influenza vaccine
- Anyone under 6 months of age

### How to prevent the flu:



### Expected vaccine side effects:



redness, tenderness or swelling



headache



fever and chills



muscle aches



nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

### Tips for side effects

**Sore arm:** apply a cool, damp cloth or wrapped ice pack.

**Pain or fever:** take medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

Check with your health-care provider if you need advice about medication.

Wait at the clinic for at least 15 minutes after receiving your vaccine. You may be asked to wait 30 minutes if there is concern about a possible vaccine allergy.

### Symptoms to look out for:

- Serious side effects are rare. If you develop serious side effects or a severe allergic reaction (including hives, swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing) seek medical attention or call 911 right away.
- If you received the vaccine and experience symptoms of COVID-19, and you are a contact of someone with COVID-19, self-isolate and arrange for testing as soon as possible. Use the online COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool or call 811.

[yukonimmunization.ca](http://yukonimmunization.ca)

