

Can the vaccine give me the flu?

No. It is impossible for the flu vaccine to give you the flu as it does not contain live virus.

Some people mistakenly believe that the vaccine causes the flu because:

- An immune response is triggered following vaccination which can produce mild flu-like symptoms that mimic the flu infection. These only last for one to two days.
- It takes two weeks following vaccination to produce protection. Some people may develop the flu during this period because they have come into contact with the virus before or soon after vaccination (but prior to developing protection).
- The common cold or other respiratory viruses may be confused with the flu. The flu vaccine only protects you against the flu virus.
- The flu vaccine is not 100% effective so you can still get the flu from someone who is infected. However your infection will usually be milder.

Flu! It can stop with you

For more information on immunisation programs in the ACT, visit:

<http://health.act.gov.au/our-services/immunisation> or contact Health Protection Service, Immunisation Unit, on (02) 6205 2300.

Acknowledgment of Country

ACT Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. ACT Health respects their continuing culture and connections to the land and the unique contributions they make to the life of this area. ACT Health also acknowledges and welcomes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are part of the community we serve.

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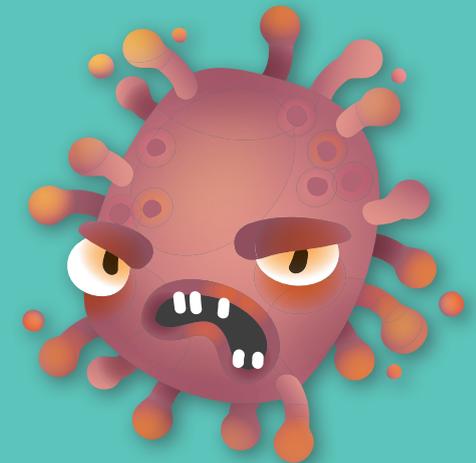
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Flu



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What is the flu?

Influenza (flu) is a highly contagious illness that occurs after infection with the flu virus. It is spread from person to person by droplets produced during coughing or sneezing.

Most people who get the flu are unwell for a few days and then recover. However, flu can be very serious in some people, causing hospitalisation and even death. It is not possible to know who will be severely affected by flu. **Every year, previously healthy people are hospitalised and die from the virus.**

The flu vaccine reduces your risk of getting the flu and its potentially serious complications. It also helps protect those around you, including your family, friends and colleagues.

Why am I recommended to have the vaccine?

Vaccination is the single most effective way to stop the spread of flu. **All staff, including non-clinical staff and volunteers should receive the flu vaccine each year.**

- Healthcare workers are at greater risk of getting the flu as they are more likely to come in contact with the virus.
- Healthcare workers are often the source of infection for residents. The elderly are at higher risk of serious flu complications, including death.
- Flu is infectious one day before symptoms develop and up to seven days after.
- Even if you don't show symptoms, you can spread it to others.

Why should I get the vaccine if our residents are vaccinated?

Elderly people do not respond as well to the flu vaccine as healthy adults because the immune system weakens with age. They may not be as well protected against the flu as a younger person. By getting the flu vaccine, you are providing an extra layer of protection for your residents. If you don't get the flu, you can't spread it.

What are the side effects?

Serious reactions to the vaccine are rare. The most common reactions are pain, redness and swelling at the injection site. Fever, sore muscles, and tiredness can also occur but usually only last one to two days after vaccination.