

The Flu Vaccination FAQ



Every year, up to 20% of the world's population develops seasonal flu. Early vaccination ensures the best protection from this potentially serious illness.

What is the flu vaccine? How does it work?

Flu vaccines are produced every year with consideration to different viral strains each time. This is because the flu virus mutates often. Scientists predict which type of virus is most likely to cause the most cases of the seasonal flu for that year.

This year's vaccine contains the H1N1 strain as well as two new strains. The H1N1 strain caused the 2008 pandemic and is still able to cause large scale infection.

The vaccine is not made of live virus, so it does not cause a flu infection. It does, however, stimulate the body into making the antibodies to those strains of virus. These antibodies are one of the main ways the body can fight a flu infection if you are exposed to that virus later in the season.

Why should I have a flu shot?

Each year around the world, many people die from the effects of the flu infection. They are often people with weaker immune system such as the elderly, young children, and pregnant women. When they are infected with flu, they are more likely to develop serious symptoms.

The flu shot decreases the risk of getting that year's seasonal flu infection. It does not guarantee that you will not get the flu if you have had the vaccination, but it lowers the likelihood of this happening dramatically.

Who should have the flu shot?

Everyone can benefit from having a flu shot. It is recommended that all persons older than 6 months unless otherwise advised by their doctor should receive the flu shot annually.

It is particularly recommended for:

- older people (over 50)
- pregnant women
- people with chronic diseases such as diabetes, serious heart and/or lung conditions, kidney or liver disease, and people with lower immunity for any reason
- people living in residential care settings or work in healthcare
- young children between 6 months and 5 years old

**Note: Children aged 6 months to 8 years with unknown vaccination status who have never received seasonal influenza vaccine before (as well as children who did not receive at least 1 dose of influenza A (H1N1) 2009 monovalent vaccine regardless of previous influenza vaccine history) are recommended to receive a 2nd dose at 4 weeks after 1st shot.*

When should I have the flu shot?

The earlier the better. After vaccination, it takes about 10 to 14 days for the body to develop antibodies. Therefore, you should try to get the flu shot as soon as it is available.

However, it is still worthwhile to have the flu shot anytime if the flu season is still active.

For people residing in the North Hemisphere, the best time to have the flu shot is between September and November so that you can get the longest protection.

The protection will be effective for the whole year during the flu season.

However, every year you will still need to get a new shot as the virus strains change year on year.

Who should NOT have the flu shot?

Only people who have had a previous severe reaction to flu shots or to eggs (eggs are used in the production of the vaccine) are not recommended to have flu shots routinely.

I am pregnant. Is it safe to have the flu shot?

Yes, it is safe for a woman to have a flu shot at any stage of her pregnancy.

It has been shown that pregnant women suffer more problems with the flu. Therefore, it is especially important for pregnant women to receive flu shot so that the vaccine can protect both the mother and the baby from flu complications.

Will the flu shot hurt me?

Some people may have a sore arm or develop a slight temperature with some muscle aches for a day or two after the injection. However, the flu shot is very safe and serious complications are extremely rare.

For any medical enquiry regarding the flu vaccination, please contact SOS Medica Mongolia Clinic at +976 11 464325 / 26 / 27.

Book your vaccination today at admin@sosmedica.mn or call us at +976 11 464325 / 26 / 27

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