



Australian Government
Department of Health



GET THE FLU SHOT BEFORE THE FLU GETS YOU

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO VACCINATE

VACCINATION PROVIDERS FACT SHEET

- ✔ Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for any person six months of age and older who wishes to reduce the likelihood of becoming ill with influenza.
- ✔ Government funded influenza vaccines under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) will be available from April 2017 for those people who have the greatest risk of becoming severely ill from influenza.
- ✔ Recent evidence suggests that protection following influenza vaccination may begin to wane after three to four months and timing of vaccination should aim at achieving the highest level of protection during peak influenza season, usually around August.
- ✔ Four age-specific quadrivalent influenza vaccines (QIVs) will be available free of charge to eligible people under the NIP.
- ✔ Before administering an influenza vaccine, CHECK you have the correct vaccine for the person's age.
 - Afluria Quad® (Seqirus) must only be administered to people aged 18 years and older.
 - FluQuadri Junior® (Sanofi Pasteur) is the only influenza vaccine for the six months to less than three years age group. Do not give a half dose of any other influenza vaccine.

Advice on the use of influenza vaccines can be found in *The Australian Immunisation Handbook 10th edition* and in the *Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) advice for immunisation providers regarding the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines in 2017*, both available at immunise.health.gov.au

PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE INFLUENZA VACCINE UNDER THE NIP

Under the NIP, the following people are eligible to receive free influenza vaccines:

- ✔ pregnant women
- ✔ people aged 65 years and over
- ✔ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged
 - six months to less than five years
 - 15 years and over
- ✔ people aged six months and over with medical conditions predisposing them to severe influenza, namely:
 - cardiac disease, including cyanotic congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease
 - chronic respiratory conditions, including severe asthma, cystic fibrosis, bronchiectasis, suppurative lung disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and chronic emphysema
 - chronic neurological conditions that impact on respiratory function, including hereditary and degenerative central nervous system diseases (including multiple sclerosis), seizure disorders, spinal cord injuries and neuromuscular disorders
 - immunocompromising conditions, including immunocompromised due to disease or treatment (e.g. malignancy, transplantation and/or chronic steroid use), asplenia or splenic dysfunction, and HIV infection
 - diabetes and other metabolic disorders
 - renal disease, especially for chronic renal failure
 - haematological disorders, including haemoglobinopathies
 - children aged six months to 10 years on long term aspirin therapy.

2017 NATIONAL IMMUNISATION PROGRAM INFLUENZA VACCINES

This year, four age-specific quadrivalent influenza vaccines (QIVs) which contain four strains of influenza virus will be available free of charge to eligible people under the NIP.

The QIVs will cover two A strains of influenza (Michigan and Hong Kong) and two B strains of influenza (Brisbane and Phuket). The Michigan strain of influenza is new in 2017, replacing California.

The four vaccines are:

- ✔ FluQuadri Junior® (Sanofi Pasteur) for children from six months to under three years of age
- ✔ FluQuadri® (Sanofi Pasteur) for people aged three years and older
- ✔ Fluarix Tetra® (GSK) for people aged three years and older
- ✔ Afluria Quad® (Seqirus) for people aged 18 years and older.

Before administering an influenza vaccine, **CHECK** you have the correct vaccine for the person's age. Ages are now identified on the syringe to make it easier for you to check.

INFLUENZA VACCINATION IN CHILDREN

Children can begin to be immunised against influenza from six months of age. Children aged six months to under nine years of age require two doses, at least four weeks apart, in the first year they receive the vaccine. While two doses in the first year are recommended, one dose does provide some protection and is preferable to receiving no doses. One dose of influenza vaccine is required in subsequent years even if only one dose was given in the first year. A single dose of influenza vaccine should be given to all children aged nine years and over.

REPORTING INFLUENZA VACCINATION TO THE AUSTRALIAN IMMUNISATION REGISTER

The Australian Childhood Immunisation Register has now become the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) and accepts data on vaccines administered to people of all ages. Providers are required to submit data to the AIR on all vaccines administered, including against influenza.

ADVERSE EVENTS FOLLOWING IMMUNISATION

Notification of all adverse events following immunisation at any age should be through the usual reporting mechanisms in your state or territory.

There may be a small increase in the risk of fever when a child receives both the influenza vaccine and the

pneumococcal vaccine (Prevenar 13) at the same time. These two vaccines can be given separately, with at least a three day interval between them, to reduce the likelihood of fever.

People with an egg allergy, including anaphylaxis, can be safely vaccinated with influenza vaccines.

People with a history of anaphylaxis to egg can be vaccinated with a full vaccine dose in medical facilities with staff experienced in recognising and treating anaphylaxis.

VACCINE DELIVERY

Your state or territory health department will begin delivering 2017 NIP influenza vaccines from mid April 2017.

VACCINATION TIMING

You can administer the vaccine to eligible people as soon as it is available to you. Continue to offer vaccination throughout the influenza season.

Recent evidence suggests that protection following influenza vaccination may begin to wane after three to four months and timing of vaccination should aim at achieving the highest level of protection during the period of influenza virus circulation, usually around August.

When considering when to vaccinate patients please take note of the special needs of pregnant women (who should receive the vaccine at any stage during pregnancy), people travelling to a destination where influenza is circulating, and young children six months to nine years of age (who should have two doses in the first year they receive the vaccine).

FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) provides detailed advice for vaccination providers regarding the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines in 2017. The ATAGI advice is available at the Immunise Australia website (immunise.health.gov.au).

Further information is available in *The Australian Immunisation Handbook 10th edition* (online) also available at the Immunise Australia website.

You can also order resources supporting the 2017 NIP influenza vaccine at the Immunise Australia website.

State and territory health department contact numbers:

ACT	02 6205 2300
NSW	1300 066 055
NT	08 8922 8044
WA	08 9321 1312
SA	1300 232 272
TAS	1800 671 738
VIC	1300 882 008
QLD	13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

All information in this fact sheet is correct as at 18 March 2017 and valid for the 2017 influenza season.

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2017 FLU SHOT AVAILABLE NOW

FACT SHEET FLU SEASON 2017