

# WORKPLACE FLU JABS

## Influenza — 'The Flu'

Influenza is caused by different strains of the Influenza virus, and symptoms vary depending on age, immune status, and overall health.

It is more serious than a common cold and can lead to hospitalisation, complications, and even death. Symptoms may include fever, muscle aches, headache, severe fatigue, dry cough, sore throat, runny nose, and feeling generally unwell. Fever and body aches usually last 3–5 days, while cough and fatigue can continue for two weeks or more.

Influenza can also cause serious complications, especially for people with heart or lung conditions, such as pneumonia, worsening asthma, heart failure, and, in severe cases, death.

## Transmission — How is it spread?

'The Flu' spreads through direct contact, contaminated surfaces, and inhaling airborne virus particles. It can be aerosolised even without coughing or sneezing.

People can transmit Influenza with or without symptoms. Adults are infectious for up to five days, and children for up to two weeks.

While most people recover, Influenza can cause serious complications or death. Those at highest risk include young children, adults over 65, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems, though severe illness can occur at any age.

## The Vaccine — 2026 Season

Maxwell Health will be using the Fluzone Influenza Vaccine for its nurse visits in 2026. The Southern Hemisphere vaccine contains the following three virus strains:

- an A/Missouri/11/2025 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- an A/Singapore/GP20238/2024 (H3N2)-like virus; and
- a B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus.

## Why are there only three strains this year?

The 2026 season will see the return of the Trivalent (3 Strain) Influenza vaccine. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has recommended this as the Yamagata strain hasn't been in circulation since COVID-19.

Around one in four New Zealanders are infected with Influenza each year.

Many people won't feel sick at all, but can still pass it on to others.

**Influenza can be anywhere.**



## Why is 'the Flu' immunisation needed every year?

Flu vaccines are seasonal. We need to be vaccinated every year because there are different strains of the Flu virus circulating. It is updated annually by the WHO, and protection lessens over time.

## How effective is the vaccine for healthy adults?

Influenza vaccination is approximately 80% effective in preventing infection with Influenza A and B viruses in healthy adults under 65 years of age, when there is a good match between the vaccine and circulating influenza strains.

## Will immunisation protect me against the common cold?

No – The vaccine will only provide protection against the strains of Influenza virus present in the vaccine.

## Who should be immunised?

Everyone, even the fit and healthy. Influenza continues to be a major threat to public health worldwide because of its ability to spread rapidly through populations.

*Choose to protect yourself*  
and your family's health this winter

## Can you get Influenza from the vaccine?

No – The vaccines have been made from Influenza virus that has been concentrated, inactivated, then broken apart. It cannot cause Influenza as the vaccine does not contain any live viruses. It takes up to two weeks for the vaccine to give full protection. Your body responds to the vaccine by producing an immune response. This can include systemic symptoms such as fever, malaise and muscle aches but IS NOT the Flu, it's your body creating antibodies to fight the real flu.

## Where is the injection site?

The Flu Vaccine is an intramuscular (IM) injection. Our nurse will administer the injection into the deltoid muscle at the top of the arm.

## Do I have to wait after the injection?

Yes – 5-20 mins following the vaccination, this is to ensure no anaphylactic reaction occurs.

## What are the commonly reported adverse events?

Commonly reported adverse events redness and swelling at the injection site. Other common adverse events include headache, myalgia, pain at injection site and fatigue.

## Is Influenza immunisation recommended for pregnant & breastfeeding women?

**Yes & Yes** – It is strongly recommended for both pregnant and lactating mother's. Please consult your LMC further.



PH 0800 376 600



[www.maxwellhealth.co.nz](http://www.maxwellhealth.co.nz)

Need more info, visit:

<https://maxwellhealth.co.nz/workplace-flu-vaccinations/faqs/>

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