

Safety Topic of the Month

2016-2017 Influenza Update

All info taken from cdc.gov

Getting an annual flu vaccine is the first and best way to protect yourself and your family from the flu. Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations.

What's new this flu season?

- Only injectable flu shots are recommended for use this season.
- Flu vaccines have been updated to better match circulating viruses.
- There will be some new vaccines on the market this season.
- The recommendations for vaccination of people with egg allergies have changed.

Shot options this season include:

- Standard dose flu shots
- High-dose shot for older people.
- A shot made with adjuvant for older people.
- A shot made with virus grown in cell culture.
- A shot made using a vaccine production technology (recombinant vaccine) that does not require the use of flu virus.

Live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) – or the nasal spray vaccine – is not recommended for use during the 2016-2017 season because of concerns about its effectiveness

What viruses do 2016-2017 flu vaccines protect against?

For 2016-2017, three-component vaccines are recommended to contain:

- A/California/7/2009 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus.
- A/Hong Kong/4801/2014 (H3N2)-like virus.
- B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus (B/Victoria lineage).

Four component vaccines are recommended to include the same three viruses above, plus an additional B virus called B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata lineage).

Can I get a flu vaccine if I am allergic to eggs?

People who have experienced only hives after exposure to egg can get any licensed flu vaccine that is otherwise appropriate for their age and health.

People who have symptoms other than hives after exposure to eggs, such as angioedema, respiratory distress, lightheadedness, or recurrent emesis; or who have needed epinephrine or another emergency medical intervention, also can get any licensed flu vaccine that is otherwise appropriate for their age and health, but the vaccine should be given in a medical setting and be supervised by a health care provider who is able to recognize and manage severe allergic conditions. (Settings include hospitals, clinics, health departments, and physician offices). People with egg allergies no longer have to wait 30 minutes after receiving their vaccine.

Will new flu viruses circulate this season?

Flu viruses are constantly changing so it's not unusual for new flu viruses to appear each year.

When will flu activity begin and when will it peak?

The timing of flu is very unpredictable and can vary in different parts of the country and from season to season. Seasonal flu viruses can be detected year-round, however, seasonal flu activity can begin as early as October and continue to occur as late as May. Flu activity most commonly peaks in the United States between December and March.

When should I get vaccinated?

Getting vaccinated before flu activity begins helps protect you once the flu season starts in your community. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for the body's immune response to fully respond and for you to be protected so make plans to get vaccinated. CDC recommends that people get a flu vaccine by the end of October, if possible. However, getting vaccinated later can still be beneficial. CDC recommends ongoing flu vaccination as long as influenza viruses are circulating, even into January or later. Children aged 6 months through 8 years who need two doses of vaccine should get the first dose as soon as possible to allow time to get the second dose before the start of flu season. The two doses should be given at least 28 days apart.