



# Influenza Vaccination

## Recommendations for the 2022-2023 Flu Season

The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) has endorsed updated recommendations on vaccines for seasonal influenza from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). **The AAFP and the CDC recommend routine annual influenza vaccination for all patients six months and older who do not have contraindications.**

Here are five more key facts from the CDC recommendations for the 2022-2023 flu season:

- Vaccine acceptance** – Patients are more likely to accept a vaccine recommendation from a source they know well and trust, such as their family physician or community leaders.
- Coadministration** – The influenza vaccine can be coadministered with other vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines and the recombinant zoster vaccine (RZV).
- Vaccine composition** – All influenza vaccines for the 2022-2023 flu season will be quadrivalent and include hemagglutinin from the following:
  - One influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus
  - One influenza A(H3N2) virus
  - One influenza B/Victoria lineage virus
  - One influenza B/Yamagata lineage virus
- Vaccination timing** – Vaccination in July and August is not recommended for most groups. Ideally, most people who only need one dose of influenza vaccine for the season should be vaccinated in September or October. However, vaccination should continue throughout the season for as long as influenza viruses are circulating.
- New this flu season** – For adults 65 and older, higher-dose or adjuvanted influenza vaccines are preferentially recommended because they are potentially more effective than standard-dose unadjuvanted influenza vaccines. Patients in this age group should receive one of the following:
  - Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent
  - Flublok Quadrivalent
  - Flud Quadrivalent

Family physicians and team members can protect patients from severe illness and health complications by promoting influenza vaccination as soon as it is available each year and providing the vaccine throughout the flu season.

## Misconceptions and Facts About the Influenza Vaccine

Influenza vaccination rates have been lower in recent years. Many patients have been hesitant to visit a clinic in person or have experienced vaccine fatigue. Your patients may also have misconceptions about the flu and the influenza vaccine. It is important to be ready to counter these misconceptions with facts so that you can effectively encourage your patients to get vaccinated.

Misconception	Fact
The flu vaccine will make me sick.	You cannot get the flu from an influenza vaccine. Some people report mild side effects after getting a flu shot, but these usually resolve in 1-2 days. Side effects may include soreness, redness, or swelling at the injection site; low-grade fever; headache; and muscle aches.
It's better to get sick with the flu than to get the flu vaccine.	Even for healthy people, the flu can cause serious health complications that increase the risk of hospitalization or death.
I don't need a flu vaccine this year because I got one last year.	The CDC and AAFP recommend annual influenza vaccination for everyone 6 months and older because vaccine protection declines over time and flu viruses are constantly changing.
The flu vaccine increases my risk of getting COVID-19.	There is no evidence that getting an influenza vaccine increases your risk of getting sick from a coronavirus like COVID-19.
My immune system is fine, so I don't need to get vaccinated.	Getting vaccinated also protects those around you, including those who are vulnerable to serious health complications from the flu.
I can't get the flu vaccine because I'm pregnant.	The CDC recommends that all pregnant women get vaccinated against the flu. This protects pregnant women and has the added benefit of protecting babies until they can be vaccinated at six months of age.
I didn't get the flu vaccine early enough in the season, so it's too late to get it now.	It is best to get vaccinated by the end of October, but the flu season can last until January or later. It's better to get vaccinated later in the season than not at all.