

Influenza Vaccination Pocket Guide

Indications

Vaccination against influenza is recommended for **all** persons who meet the criteria below:

- Age 50 years or older
- Age 6 months to 49 years with any of the following conditions:
 - ❖ a chronic disorder of the pulmonary or cardiovascular system, including asthma
 - ❖ a chronic disease of the blood, kidneys, or immune system (including HIV), or diabetes that has required medical follow-up or hospitalization in the preceding year
 - ❖ a woman who will be in the 2nd or 3rd trimester of pregnancy during the influenza season
 - ❖ a child or teenager receiving long-term aspirin therapy
- Reside in a nursing home or other chronic-care facility
- Likely to transmit influenza to persons at high risk, including:
 - ❖ health care workers, caregivers, or household members in contact with persons having high-risk conditions
 - ❖ household contacts or out-of-home caretakers of children 0–23 months of age

Influenza vaccination of children 6–23 months of age is encouraged because of their higher risk of hospitalization from influenza.

Any other person ≥ 6 months of age wishing to reduce the likelihood of becoming ill with influenza may be vaccinated.

Contraindications and Precautions

- Do not give influenza vaccine to a person who has had a serious reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) to eggs, to a previous dose of influenza vaccine, or to one of its components.
- You can give live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) to healthy, non-pregnant persons 5–49 years of age. Do not give LAIV to persons with chronic disease that constitutes an increased risk when exposed to wild influenza virus (e.g., asthma, heart and renal disease, diabetes). Inactivated influenza vaccine (IIV) is preferred for persons with close contact with immunosuppressed persons.

Vaccine Dosing and Administration

- IIV may be given to persons ≥ 6 months of age. If age 6–35 months, give 0.25 mL; if age ≥ 3 years, give 0.5 mL. Give IM with a 22–25g, ≥ 1 " needle.
- Healthy persons 5–49 years of age may receive LAIV 0.5 mL (0.25 mL sprayed into each nostril).
- Children younger than 9 years of age who are receiving influenza vaccine for the first time should receive 2 doses. For IIV, separate by ≥ 4 weeks. For LAIV given to children 5–8 years of age, separate by ≥ 6 weeks.

Side Effects

- The most common side effect from IIV is soreness and redness at the injection site, lasting 1–2 days.
- The most common side effects from LAIV are runny nose and nasal congestion.

Talking Points with Patients

- Influenza is a serious respiratory disease caused by a virus. It is not the same as the common cold or stomach flu.
- Influenza results in more than 35,000 deaths and more than 110,000 hospitalizations each year in the U.S.
- The best way to avoid getting influenza is to get vaccinated. You can't prevent the disease by just washing your hands and getting rest, although these measures may help.
- You can't get "the flu" from the inactivated vaccine.
- Because the influenza virus is always changing, the vaccine is not always a perfect match for the viruses that circulate during a current influenza season. Nonetheless, vaccinated persons who become ill with influenza will likely experience milder illness.
- Unvaccinated healthy people who get influenza can spread it to others who are vulnerable. By protecting yourself, you're also protecting the people you love!
- The best time to get your influenza vaccine is during October or November. However, you can still benefit from the protection if you get it in December or later.

**Urge your patients to get vaccinated.
Your recommendation is a strong motivator!**