



Influenza

www.flu.oregon.gov

Flu Vaccine Facts

Introduction

The best way to prevent influenza is vaccination. It's important to get a seasonal flu shot or nasal-spray vaccine as soon as they become available in the fall.



Each vaccine contains three influenza viruses. The viruses in the vaccine change each year based on scientists' estimations about which types and strains of viruses will circulate in a given year. H1N1 is one of the flu strains included in this year's vaccine.

Flu vaccines:

- The seasonal (or common) flu is a respiratory illness that can be transmitted person to person. Most people have some immunity. There are two types of seasonal flu vaccines:
 - A flu shot given with a needle, usually in the arm.
 - A nasal-spray flu vaccine. Nasal spray vaccine can be used by healthy people between the ages of 2 and 49. It should not be used by pregnant women, children under the age of 2, or adults aged 50 and older.
- About two weeks after vaccination, the body develops antibodies that provide protection against influenza virus infection.

Oregon Public Health recommends that everyone be vaccinated for seasonal flu each year. Here's why:

- People with underlying health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease are at increased risk of hospitalization and death from flu.

- Pregnant women and people age 65 and older are also at increased risk of hospitalization and death from flu.
- Healthcare workers, emergency medical responders, and children ages 6 months to 19 years are more likely to spread the virus to others.
- Everyone else should be vaccinated to avoid getting sick and to protect those in their community who cannot be vaccinated or are at risk of complications from the flu.



Who should not be vaccinated?

- There are some people who should not be vaccinated without first consulting a physician. These include:
 - People who have severe allergy to chicken eggs
 - People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination.
 - People who developed Guillain-Barré syndrome within six weeks of getting an influenza vaccine
 - Children less than 6 months of age (influenza vaccine is not approved for this age group)
 - People who have a moderate to severe illness with a fever (they should wait until they recover to get vaccinated).



Vaccine effectiveness

- It is still possible, though much less likely, to get the flu even if you've been vaccinated.
- The ability of flu vaccine to protect a person depends on the age and health of the person getting the vaccine, and the similarity or "match" between the virus strains in the vaccine and those in circulation. Testing has shown that both the flu shot and the nasal-spray vaccine are effective at preventing the flu.
- Seasonal flu vaccine protects against serious illness from flu, even if it doesn't prevent infection completely.

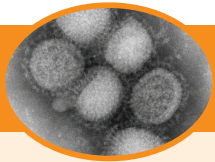


How can I find a flu shot this year?

- For seasonal flu vaccine, both SafeNet www.oregonsafenet.org and the American Lung Association (ALA) www.flucliniclocator.org can help you find the location of flu shot clinics.
- For information about when and where you can get vaccinated, call the Oregon Public Health Flu Hotline at: **1-800-978-3040**, or visit www.flu.oregon.gov.

Vaccine side effects

- The seasonal flu shot and nasal spray have different side effects.
- The seasonal flu shot have minor side effects that begin soon after the shot and last one to two days, such as:
 - Redness or swelling where the shot was given
 - Low-grade fever, aches and soreness.
 - The seasonal flu nasal-spray vaccine may cause such minor side effects as:
 - In children: runny nose, wheezing, headache, vomiting, muscle aches and fever
 - In adults: runny nose, sore throat and cough.



For more information

Oregon Public Health Division
www.flu.oregon.gov

Oregon Public Health Hotline
1-800-978-3040

Oregon county health departments
www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/lhd/lhd.shtml

Federal flu information
www.flu.gov

World Health Organization
www.who.int

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