



What is Influenza?

Influenza (the flu) is a viral infection, that is contagious and can affect people of all ages and is spread by tiny droplets of fluid containing the virus from coughs and sneezes that are in the air or can land on surfaces and be picked up by hands by anyone who touches them.

Influenza symptoms may include runny nose or blocked nose, sneezing, fever, chills, tiredness, dry or chesty cough, sore throat, headaches, aching muscles, limb or joint pain, diarrhea and loss of appetite.

Can everyone receive the flu vaccine?

Yearly influenza vaccination is recommended. You can receive an influenza vaccine at the same time as a COVID-19 vaccine. If you have any of the following, please ensure you have discussed having a vaccine with your GP prior to booking in with us:

- If you have experienced anaphylaxis after a previous dose of influenza vaccine or to any component of the vaccine.
- If you have or have had Guillain-Barre syndrome after receiving a flu vaccine.
- If you take medicines that may reduce your immune response, such as corticosteroids, chemotherapy, radiotherapy.
- If you have moderate to severe illness with or without a fever.
- If you have an egg allergy, including anaphylaxis.

What if I am over 65 years of age?

People aged 65 years and over can have a vaccine that is specifically designed to produce a higher immune response, this is available for free from your GP. VW does not supply this vaccine. Please contact your healthcare provider directly to discuss the most suitable choice for you.

Why should I have an influenza vaccine every year?

Each year the strains of influenza virus are reviewed, and the vaccines changed according to the current strains. It takes 2 weeks after the influenza vaccine to develop immunity. Protection provided by the influenza vaccine is optimal 3-4 months after vaccination. Common time of year for influenza vaccination in Australia is April or May before the peak of influenza season.

Can the flu vaccine give me the flu?

Influenza vaccines are inactivated meaning they do not contain the live flu virus, so you cannot get influenza from the influenza vaccine. You may experience mild side effects after an influenza vaccine which are signs that your body is responding to the vaccine and producing antibodies against the actual disease.

What are the common side effects following flu vaccine?

These include pain, redness, swelling at injection site, occasionally an injection-site lump, mild fever, tiredness, or muscle aches.

If you experience any serious symptoms after receiving the vaccine, please contact your doctor immediately.

What strains are covered in this year's Australian vaccine?

Vitality works supplies a quadrivalent influenza vaccine.
A/Victoria/4897/2022 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus
A/Thailand/8/2022 (H3N2) -like virus
B/Austria/1359417/2021-like (B/Victoria lineage) virus
B/Phuket/3073/2013-like (B/Yamagata lineage) virus (CDC 2022)

How do I make a booking?

Use the URL or QR code provided by your organisation. Follow the prompts to create an account and make a booking. You will need your Medicare card or Individual Health Identifier (IHI) number.

Anyone over the age of 18 must give their own consent and have their own email address to make a booking.

How do I obtain my influenza certificate?

VW works will send your vaccination to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). To obtain a copy -sign in or create a myGov account at www.my.gov.au select proof of vaccination quick link – follow the prompts. If you don't have a Medicare number use your IHI number. Children over 14 years of age need to create a separate myGov account.

Enquiries

VW Booking Support 1300 662 328

Email: booking.support@vitalityworks.com.au

References:

CDC (2022) Frequently asked Influenza (Flu) Questions: 2022-2023
Australian Government Department of Health. Immunisation Handbook. Influenza Vaccine (Online version 2022)
NSW Health (2022) Seasonal influenza vaccination – Frequently asked questions
Australian Government (2022) myGov www.my.gov.au
Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (2022) Therapeutic Goods Administration. Influenza (flu) vaccines
AIVC Recommendations for the Composition of Influenza Vaccines for Australia in 2024 www.tga.gov.au

